NVMEN

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

CONTENTS

NVMEN

EDITORS' PAGE

In spite of the Editors' selectivity in accepting mss. for publica-
tion, more material has accumulated than can easily be ac-
comodated in the space at our disposal. In fact, some of the papers
received and accepted are so bulky that they will have to be spread
over two or more numbers of NUMEN. Also the book-review sec-
tion has inevitably suffered, and instead of individual full-length
reviews, a condensed ''survey'' of recent literature may have to be
published before long so as to catch up with our arrears. The sub-
ject of book-reviews may require thorough consideration before
long (i.e. the relation reviews/articles) in any issue, since for many
scholars the book-reviews constitute the most valuable part of their
journals. In fact, a great many learned periodicals devote more
than half their space to reviews.

NUMEN had always hoped to serve also as a forum for scholarly
debate. One such discussion was launched in vol. XXVI (1979) by
Prof. F. Staal. The basic issue was whether the ''semasiological''
approach really constituted the *via regis* to religious studies: rituals,
myths, symbols—they are all ''languages'' and hence only require
decoding viz. translating so that their ''meaning'' could be
''understood''. It was this view which Staal contested. Prof. H.
Penner's rejoinder appeared in NUMEN vol. XXIX (1985). With
the present issue Prof. Staal is taking up the same problem again,
arguing his case in greater detail and at greater length.

At the 1985 Congress of the IAHR Prof. Eric Sharpe (University
of Sydney) indicated that in view of the geographical distance and
frequent postal delays he felt that he could not really serve
NUMEN efficiently as a co-editor and suggested that the editorial
work should remain in the hands of Professors M. Heerma van
Voss and R. J. Zwi Werblowsky. His proposal was accepted, but
Prof. Sharpe kindly agreed to join the Editorial Advisory Board so
that—geographical distance and postal delays notwithstanding—
the Editors have a consultant also in Australia.

On April 22, 1986, Prof. Mircea Eliade (b. 1907) passed away
in Chicago, only a few weeks after having completed his 79th year.
He died after a short illness, fortunately without pain.

His passing away marks a caesura in the contemporary study of the History of Religions, and leaves a vacuum not only in the academic and literary world, but in the lives of all those who had the privilege of being close to him. It is too early to publish an obituary whilst we are still trying to come to terms with this loss. But the Editors feel that it would be impossible to open this issue of NUMEN without an evocation—in gratitude and veneration—of Mircea Eliade's name.

INDO-EUROPEAN TRIPARTITION AND THE
ARA PACIS AUGUSTAE:
AN EXCURSUS IN IDEOLOGICAL ARCHAEOLOGY*

G. Freibergs - C. S. Littleton - U. Strutynski

Abstract

The Ara Pacis Augustae or Altar of Augustan Peace, erected by the Emperor outside Rome in 9 B.C., expresses perhaps more clearly than any other monument the ideology of the Augustan Age: the peaceful union of Rome with her Empire. At the same time, in the iconography of the east and west fronts, and especially in the images on the altar table, pedestal and plinth, it contains several expressions whose structures appear consonant with the tripartite Indo-European ideology that was derived from the earliest phases of religion at Rome and elsewhere in the ancient Indo-European speaking domain by Georges Dumézil. Finally, this monument also appears to constitute a crystallized cognitive map—a visible set of reference points—in terms of which the Romans of the period could orient themselves to their contemporary circumstances, future expectations, and a past studded with subconscious echoes of their Indo-European heritage.

On July 4, 13 B.C., shortly after the Emperor Augustus returned from successful campaigns in Gaul and Spain, the Roman Senate decided to honor him by consecrating an altar to the universal peace these victories had established throughout the Empire.[1] Three and a half years later, on January 30, 9 B.C., the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, as it came to be called, was dedicated and rapidly took its place as one of the premier monuments of the Augustan Age.[2] Restored to something approximating its former glory in 1937-38 by Guiseppe Moretti, the *Ara Pacis* continues to be a reminder of the grandeur of that first Imperial epoch in which it was possible to contemplate and memorialize the ideal of universal peace.[3]

But from the standpoint of comparative Indo-European studies, the *Ara Pacis Augustae* is possibly much more than a monument to the perpetual peace Augustus believed he had established. From this comparativistic perspective, it appears to integrate the worldview espoused by Augustus and his contemporaries with the Indo-European heritage preserved in Roman tradition.[4] Iconographically, the Altar manifests the persistence of the tripartite ideology of

sovereignty, force and fertility that Georges Dumézil and later
scholars have so convincingly attested not only for the earlier
periods of Roman history and religion, but for the entire ancient
Indo-European speaking domain.[5] This is not to assume that the
builders of the *Ara Pacis* consciously sought to represent their Indo-
European heritage, if indeed they were aware of it *as such*. Rather,
what has emerged from their efforts is a unique statement which is
at once thoroughly and unmistakably *Roman*, but at the same time
seems to harbor an echo, if you will, of a cognitive model—a tripar-
tite way of looking at the world—that was already ancient when
Rome was but a collection of huts clinging to the slopes of what
later came to be known as the Capitoline Hill.

   That this echo seems still to reverberate amidst the lateness of all
the Augustan splendor and Imperial propaganda is extremely im-
portant, for it allows us to excavate, as it were, the iconography of
the *Ara Pacis* and to assess the purely Roman and/or Augustan
aspects against the background of its ancestral heritage, just as
Gerschel[6] was able to uncover the lingering Indo-European
Weltanschauung embedded in the augural interpretations of the
defeat of Carthage and Rome's subsequent emergence as the
premier power of the ancient world. The thrust of this paper is thus
in a very real sense an adventure in ideological archaeology, an at-
tempt to peel back the layers of uniquely Roman or Augustan
ideological strata embedded in the various friezes of this monument
and expose the Indo-European substratum.[7]

   Before considering these matters, however, it is necessary to give
a brief general description of the *Ara Pacis* and its situation.

Location and General Layout

   The *Ara Pacis* was located on the northern outskirts of the ancient
city, in the northeastern corner of the Campus Martius, the Field
of Mars, a formerly undeveloped area which Augustus proceed to
convert into a monument-complex.[8] Here, early in his reign he
built a mausoleum, a little later an *ustrinum* (a structure of undeter-
mined purpose), and in 13 B.C. commenced the erection of the
largest sundial the world has known.[9] Simultaneously, at the
eastern end of this solarium, on the west side of the Via Flaminia,

the road by which he had returned victorious from the north, Augustus constructed the Altar of Peace.[10] Significantly for its symbolism of peace, as Mario Torelli has pointed out,[11] the location was exactly one mile from the pomerial line, the point at which according to the oldest tradition the returning magistrate's power would change from *imperium militiae* to *imperium domi*. Moreover, the monument's construction appears to have followed an earlier precedent when, in 19 B.C., the Senate honored Augustus on his victorious return from the East by erecting the *Ara Fortunae Reducis* before the temples of Honos and Virtus near the southern entrance to the city.[12]

Studies of the *Ara Pacis* have heretofore treated it as an independent entity. However, on the basis of a suggestion by Petersen,[13] subsequent work by Gatti[14] and recent confirmation by Buchner, it now seems clear that this monument was intimately connected with the solarium, and in fact derived a special significance from it. The solarium consisted of a 100 foot tall Egyptian obelisk that, as gnomon, threw its shadow over an expansive marble pavement inlaid with a network of bronze lines which made it possible to read accurately the time of the year as well as the hour of the day. The sides of both the obelisk and the adjacent *Ara Pacis* did not face the four cardinal directions of the heavens. Rather, their north-south axes were inclined 18°37′ west of north and ran parallel to the nearby Via Flaminia. Most significantly, the *Ara Pacis* was situated so that the equinoxial line in the grid of the solarium, if extended eastward, would cut right through the center of the sacrificial altar.[15] (Figure 1) Buchner points out, in fact, that the very plan and proportions of the *Ara Pacis*—the width of the doorways and the dimensions of its walls—were predicated on this and other features of the solarium.[16]

In spite its impressive accuracy, the solarium, located so far outside the city, away from the center of business and government, obviously did not have the telling of time as its primary function. Nor was the *Ara Pacis* as public a monument as it could have been had it stood, say, in the Forum. The obelisk, as its inscription states, celebrated the Emperor's victory over Egypt and the East, while the *Ara Pacis*, as Augustus himself noted, memorialized the
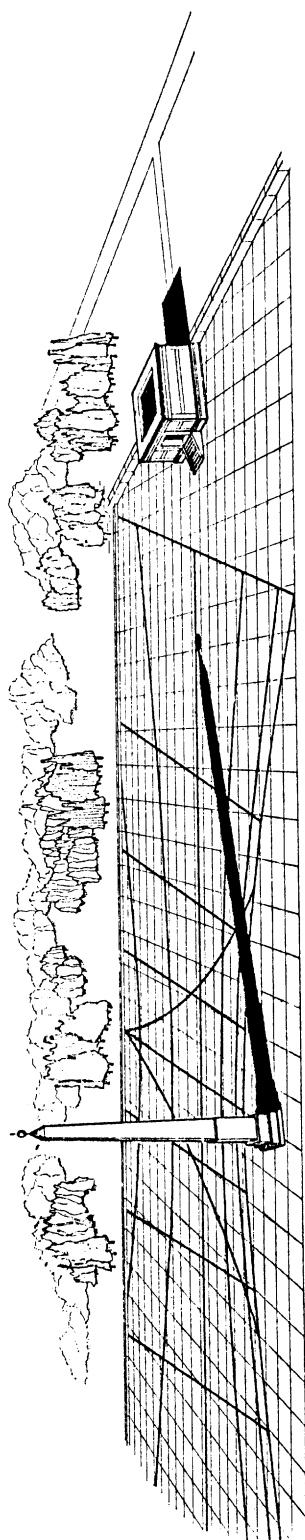
Figure 1. Solarium and *Ara Pacis* (Buchner, "Solarium," p. 353).

suppression of the remaining resistance to Roman rule in the West. Both monuments, founded and built at the same time, were intended to function as an integrated whole and to serve not the practical needs of the Roman public, but the glory and honor of the Emperor. In its immediate function, as we shall shortly see in greater detail, the *Ara Pacis* was not so much a Roman as an Augustan monument.[17]

During its restoration in 1938, the *Ara Pacis* was reoriented about ninety degrees so that the main entrance now faces south rather than onto the Campus Martius.[18] Nevertheless, the ancient orientation is clear from the archaeological evidence.[19]

Like most Roman structures of this sort, the *Ara Pacis* is open to the sky and consists of a central altar surrounded by a massive wall forming a rectangle measuring about ten by eleven meters. Of the two entrances, the one facing west is reached by a flight of steps from the Campus Martius and leads directly to the sacrificial table. The supplicant had to approach the altar from the west, that is, from the direction of the Campus Martius, as the four (or five) steps giving access to the table could only be mounted from that direction. (Plate 1) Thus, anyone wishing to perform a sacrifice, regardless of which entrance he used, had to turn his back on the obelisk of the solarium, the Augustan monument to armed victory, as well as on the Field of Mars,—and by implication, on the god who presided over that field. The other entrance is located directly opposite, on the other side of the altar, and opens at ground level toward the Via Flaminia. The presence of two entrances to such a sacred place is unusual and seems to have been inspired by native Italian architecture such as that of augural temples and the famous temple of Janus in the Forum, which also had two doorways on an east-west axis.[20] The latter shrine, reputedly founded by Numa, was, of course, also closely associated with the idea of peace—that is, the closure of both its doors was a sign that peace reigned throughout the world.[21] In constructing permanently open doorways the architects of the *Ara Pacis* seem to have drawn on this long established visual metaphor, reversing the symbolism to signify similar permanence for the peace of Augustus.

The sacrificial altar itself is elevated on a stepped platform in the center of the enclosure and decorated with three horizontal friezes

of progressively increasing width which run around the edge of the altar table, the pedestal and the plinth. This is an important aspect of the layout, and we shall return to it later.

The wall of the sacred enclosure is decorated inside and out with a variety of friezes in relief, arranged in two horizontal registers. (Plate 1) In the interior the lower zone presents a marble copy of a wooden fence, above it a series of bleached ox skulls hung on poles, between which are strung magnificently sculpted garlands of fruits and flowers, and reproductions of *paterae* or sacrificial vessels. On the exterior the lower register contains equally magnificent scroll mouldings of vigorous acanthus calyxes that sprout and spiral in symmetrical volutes.[22] On the apexes of these plants are perched delicate swans. The most interesting parts of the enclosure's outer face, however, are the figured upper panels. These exquisite reliefs, together with the friezes on the altar itself, are the main bearers of the monument's iconographic messages.

The North and South Walls

Perhaps the best known—or at least most frequently reproduced—aspect of the *Ara Pacis* iconography are the two famous friezes which adorn, respectively, the exteriors of the northern and southern walls. Both depict what at first glance appears to be a ceremonial procession. There are, however, conflicting interpretations as to what these friezes actually portray. According to most scholars,[23] the north wall (Plate 2) is devoted to representatives of the Senate, as well as Vestals and other religious functionaries, who are moving westward from the Via Flaminia toward the Campus Martius and the western entrance, while the south wall depicts a parallel column moving in the same direction (Plate 3), in this case composed of the Imperial Family and entourage— Augustus himself, his son-in-law Agrippa, Drusus and a number of other readily identifiable figures—as well as several *flāmines* and *lictores*.[24] They are on their way to a sacrifice. From the direction in which the figures are facing it is generally assumed that the two columns converge in front of the western entrance. As Kähler notes, "They [Senators, various magistrates, the Imperial Family, et al.] may have gone down like that to the Campus Martius on 4 July 13 B.C.,"[25] that is, at the time the site was consecrated.

According to Krister Hanell,[26] the few surviving fragments of the largely obliterated western end of the southern frieze are in fact the remains of a trio of goddesses: Salus Publica, Concordia and Pax. The Emperor, in the role of the Pontifex Maximus, surrounded by lictors, is in the act of offering incense to these divinities on a small portable altar (obscured by the figure of a lictor) set up for that purpose at the time of the *constitutio*. The fragmentary nature of the evidence, however, has left his hypothesis in a limbo of uncertainty, accepted by some scholars,[27] disputed by others.[28] But although the presence of the three deities on the relief remains questionable, the fact that their worship was in some way connected with the *Ara Pacis* is certain[29] and will be discussed below in the context of religion. Also, although Hanell does not take Heinz Kähler's reconstruction of the plinth frieze into consideration,[30] it will, as we shall see, serve to corroborate the trifunctional nature of the deities whose images he may have discovered on the south wall.

The Western Facade

The western side of the sacred compound, which faces the Campus Martius, includes two large panels which portray some of the immediate propagandistic messages of the Augustan Age.[31] On either side of the doorway we find images associated with the founding, respectively, of Italy and Rome, the two most significant events in the history that culminated with the ascension of Augustus and the establishment of his universal peace. The one on the left of the doorway depicts the god Mars watching his offspring, Romulus and Remus, the twin founders of Rome, and the she-wolf suckling them. (Plate 4) The right hand panel shows Aeneas offering the first sacrifice after his arrival on Italian soil.[32] (Plate 5) Contemporaries viewing the scene of the twins would have been reminded that Augustus had renewed the Lupercalia, while the temple of the Penates in the Aeneas relief recalled the fact that the Emperor had restored the temple of these divinities.[33] Several scholars have pointed out the similarity between the offering being performed by Aeneas and a hypothesized Augustan sacrificial scene around the corner from it, on the south wall.[34] Augustus is seen here as the new Aeneas and the new Romulus.[35] It is significant that both these

western panels portray benign scenes, for this underscores the immediate ideology of peace behind the cult of the *Ara Pacis*. The priest necessarily entered the sacred precinct *between* these fundamental images of the mythical prehistory of Rome and, by his presence, unified them into a single conception;[36] at the same time, by turning his back on the Field of Mars and the temple and altar to the god of war which were located there,[37] he signified the peaceful achievement of this unity. Indeed, the presence of the priest in the doorway, his back to the monuments of war, serves to complete the overall image of unity here, a unity mediated by the sacrifice to peace he is about to offer.

Underlying the Augustan ideological significance of this iconography, however, appear to be some messages from a deeper Indo-European heritage. The Aeneas panel depicts the ancestor figure engaged in and act of sacrifice. Although in the *Aeneid* his character may appear functionally multivalent, he never ceases to be a sovereign, and so in this scene also Aeneas serves in the capacity of the first function.[38] In the other panel, with the Lupercal as its central theme, the twins as reflexes of the Indo-European dioscuri represent the fertility of the third-function founders of Rome, and the presence of Mars emphasizes the dominant ancestral god—of war, to be sure—in what amounts to his tutelary ''Mars qui praeest paci'' aspect,[39] that is, a definite if subdued symbol of the second function in a sovereign role. Such promotions of second-function deities are not unknown in other Indo-European traditions, notably India, where it is the war god Indra who lends his name to the nation and is honored in a trifunctional sacrifice similar to that accorded Mars,[40] and in Greece and the Germanic lands where Zeus and Tyr respectively manifest functional slippage by occupying the celestial, sovereign, and warrior slots simultaneously. The closest counterpart to Mars, however, is Scandinavian Thor, whose patronage of fertility on the one hand, and the popular veneration he enjoys as sovereign on the other, transcend his second-function origins as a god of physical force. Such instances of warrior figures expanding to ''panfunctionality'' may well be a reflex of the pervasive military dictatorships that governed these tribes during their migrations.[41] In any event, what we seem to have on the western facade are manifestations of the first func-

tion on the Aeneas panel, and third and second functions in the scene with the founding twins and their warrior deity father.

Similar symbolism is also present in the iconography of the east front, although, as we shall see, it presents a much stronger case for considering the imagery Indo-European.

The Eastern Facade

The east front of the *Ara Pacis*, which faces the Via Flaminia, also includes two relief panels (Plate 6), although here the principal images are female. But unlike the figures on the western side, these are symbolic or allegorical rather than legendary or mythological. Their identities thus remain open to various interpretations, the meaning changing with each different level of understanding.[42]

Although the panel to the north of the doorway has been mostly obliterated, enough fragments survive to show the image of a woman seated atop a pile of enemy weapons. The southern frieze depicts a woman with two children on her lap. From the rock on which she is seated sprout poppy heads and ears of grain, at her feet cattle graze peacefully, and "from land and sea blow the winds, personified in two female figures riding on a swan and a sea-dragon."[43]

Kähler has suggested[44] that these principal figures on the eastern front could simply be enlarged versions of the female "provinces" depicted on the altar pedestal frieze. But they could also represent what Richard[45] views as the two constitutive components of Salus Publica, namely Pax, which represents the peace of victory achieved over *external* enemies, and Concordia, the harmony that prevails in the absence of *civil* war; after all, Augustus had to contend with domestic as well as foreign disturbances (that is, first as well as second-function conflicts) before his "universal peace" could be secured. For that matter, they could be any two of the Salus Publica, Concordia, Pax triad, whom we shall encounter below in association with a pile of weapons or sheaf of grain.

Most commonly, and with no serious dispute, the figure in the northern panel is identified as Rome, enthroned in peace on top of discarded arms, enjoying the universal quiet. Like her counterpart in the other panel, she appears originally to have been flanked by

two figures, which Simon interpreted as Genius populi Romani and Genius Senatus, personifications of the youthful vigor and mature dignity of the eternal city,[46] but which Torelli, on the basis of parallelism with the *Ara Fortunae Reducis*, has shown to be Honos and Virtus, "the two gods that hailed the arrival of victorious generals."[47] But Knoche[48] has pointed out that the central figure is more than merely a personification of the city; she is in fact the force that has brought about the actualization of the *res Romana*, none other than *dea Roma* herself, whose cult had been recently constituted by Augustus and whose image he was now introducing to the capital city for the first time. It has even been suggested that since from the time of Augustus on the Empire was perceived as a partnership between Greeks and Romans, Roma is presented on the *Ara Pacis* so she could be interpreted ambiguously: Romans could recognize in her *Mater patriae*, Greeks could see her as *Pallas*.[49]

The principal figure in the southern panel has generally been regarded as Tellus (or Terra Mater), although more specific studies have attempted to identify her as Saturnia Tellus,[50] or Italia,[51] and have pointed out similarities with Ceres, Cybele and Pax.[52] Most recently, however, Booth and Galinsky have argued convincingly that she is Venus.[53] There was, of course, a Venus worshipped by the Etruscans. But this is a Trojan Venus from Mt. Eryx in Sicily, a figure introduced into Rome in 217 B.C. As such she is *Venus Genetrix*, divine mother of Aeneas, ancestress of the Romans and mother of the Julian clan. She is also *Venus Victrix* and appears with some attributes of Mars.[54] Moreover, the *aurae* flanking her are just aspects of the goddess that correspond to the elements: together they represent Venus *Douritis* (the giving earth), *Acraia* (air) and *Euploia* (sea). In this way she also incorporates the qualities of Tellus and Italia. As Venus, therefore, the woman in the southern panel is connected in one way or another with every major figure of the *Ara Pacis*.[55] But whatever the narrow interpretations might be, the *symbols* associated with these figures place them just as much in accord with our reconstructed trifunctional message of the monument as with the Augustan.

The whole suggests the peace and prosperity Augustus has brought to Italy. The sheaf of poppies and grain to the right of Venus is typically symbolic of peace,[56] as is the figure of unarmed

Roma. As Benario and Torelli have pointed out, they symbolize *orbis* and *urbs*, the earth restored to fruitfulness and the state restored to order.[57] Thus, it is the eastern facade that proclaims the powerful message of the *Pax Augusta*, that the Emperor, through the triumph of Roman arms, has brought ''universal'' peace to Italy and, by extension, to the Empire as a whole.

In fact, Kähler has argued that of all the sides of the Ara Pacis, it is the eastern that must be considered as the front of the monument.[58] It faced the busy Via Flaminia and was thus the primary facade seen by the passing or approaching public, and only it has the reliefs—Roma and Venus/Italia—that proclaim the message of Augustan peace. Furthermore, although the *Ara Pacis* is entered from the west, the priest ascended the steps of the altar toward the east and faced east while officiating. Even the inner altar itself stood closer to the eastern entrance than to the western. Kähler stresses[59]—though Buchner disagrees[60]—that the eastern doorway was specifically constructed to allow visibility of the altar with its three friezes (see below) and the officiating priest. Correspondingly, as Bielefeld notes,[61] the reliefs on the inner altar itself have been so carved as to separate the figures from the background as well as from each other, making them much more pronounced than those in the exterior friezes and as distinctly visible as possible. The eastern doorway served, therefore, not so much as a means of access, but as a *Blickfeld*,[62] an opening designed to give the public a view of the sacrificial altar and its decorations. This is especially significant, because only the eastern side afforded a complete view of the altar friezes; there does not seem to have been a frieze on the western edge of the altar table or on that side of the pedestal, and the one on the plinth was interrupted by the stairway.[63] Thus between the panels of Roma and Venus opened the doorway to the actual altar. ''In order to make the *pars victoriis pax* applicable to the entire empire, the artists made the three reliefs of the altar in triple arrangement to be visible through the eastern opening.''[64] It is this full complement of friezes visible on the east side that completes the iconographic message of the monument.

As we noted already in regard to the west front, however, so also here beneath the immediate propagandistic theme are to be found elements of the Indo-European tripartite ideology. Roma ex-

presses, as Knoche puts it, both *Wehrhaftigkeit* and *Mütterlichkeit*,[65] manifestations of the second and third functions in muted form. Perhaps she embodies the forceful qualities of transfunctional femininity as exemplified by the warrior aspect of Juno, and by Athena *Nike*. Such multivalence leads naturally to the principal figure in the southern frieze. The cornucopia, children, cattle and sheaf that surround Venus all speak of material prosperity and peace, and unequivocally relate the scene to the third function. And the doorway once again mediates the two concepts embodied in the Roma and Venus/Italia panels, for through it was visible the most sacred object of the monument, the sacrificial altar, an indisputable symbol of the first function. Moreover, the presence of a priest at the altar table, his back to the Campus Martius and his face visible from the direction of the Via Flaminia, a thoroughfare that, through the name of its builder of 220 B.C., the consul C. Flaminius, echoed the name of the most sacred of Rome's priestly colleges, served to complete the tripartite ideological symbolism of the east front. As the embodiment of the first-function, this living image of the sacred personage standing at the altar complemented the second and third-function images carved on either side of the doorway. In addition, when we examine the central altar itself, we will see it emerge as a transfunctional centerpiece, as it were, of this ideological triptych.[66]

The Altar Friezes

If our interpretation of the Indo-European substratum on the western and eastern facades of the sacred compound is correct, then the clearest single expression of this ideology as embodied in the *Ara Pacis* is to be found in the series of three friezes carved on the edge of the altar table itself, the pedestal that supports it, and the plinth upon which the pedestal rests. Only parts of the uppermost of the altar table frieze have survived intact,[67] and our interpretation of the pedestal and plinth friezes is based on Kähler's reconstructions from fragments. Given the accuracy of his restoration,[68] it would appear that the iconography of this most sacred portion of the *Ara Pacis* amounts to nothing less than a canonical statement of the three functions.
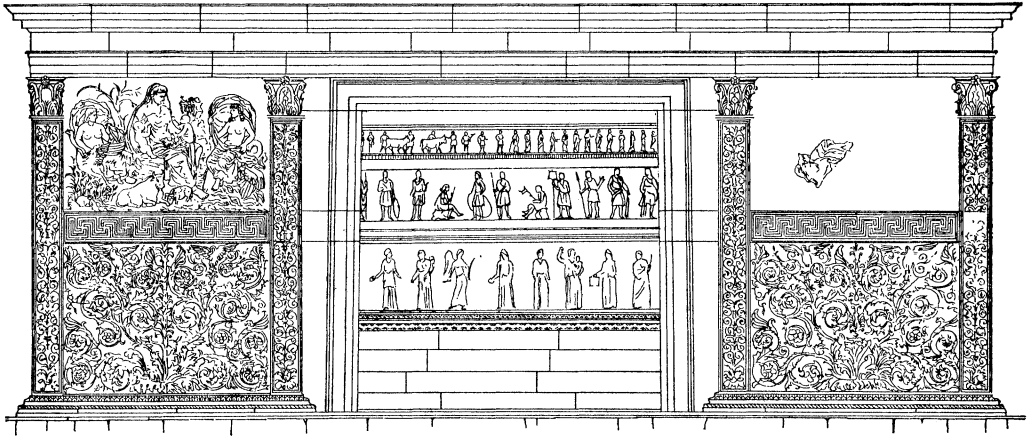
Figure 2. Eastern front of the *Ara Pacis* showing the three altar friezes (Kähler, "Ara Pacis," p. 85).

The upper frieze (Plates 7 and 8) depicts a procession of sacrificial animals led by the "magistratus et sacerdotes et virgines Vestales" to whom the Senate had assigned the performance of the annual sacred ceremonies.[69] Although portions of the frieze are missing, the surviving sections record the Vestal Virgins, among them the *virgo Vestalis maxuma*,[70] bearing an incense jar, a *simpulum* and tablets containing the sacred ritual, followed by the sacrificial sheep and cattle. Among the *sacerdotes* and attendants can be recognized several lictors, a *camillus*, a priest, a *calator*, a *flāmen* and perhaps even the *rex sacrorum*.[71] The Vestals, of course, are proper to the *sacrarium Opis Consivae* in the Regia and would thus function as figures predominantly concerned with prosperity, health and fertility.[72] But in the present context, although prominent, they are nevertheless simply one of several elements of Roman society united in the rites of the *Ara Pacis*. This frieze is universally recognized as portraying the sacrificial cult, and as such it is obviously a characteristic expression of the magico-religious aspect of the Indo-European first function.[73]

The pedestal frieze, about twice as wide as the one just described and directly below it, depicts a series of military figures whom Kähler describes as "Amazonen gleichende Frauen."[74] They all

bear arms, but stand or sit in peaceful attitudes, their weapons at rest. Kähler[75] goes on to suggest that these Amazons represent the various provinces of the Empire, though they may perhaps be *nationes*,[76] united for the first time in peaceful coexistence (hence the absence of any scenes of combat). The second-function implications involving force are inescapable here. Despite their peaceful attitudes, these legendary female warriors were famous throughout Antiquity for their physical prowess, and from Kähler's reconstruction their functional identification admits of no other reasonable interpretation.

The lowest of the three friezes, which Kähler calls "der grosse Fries" because of its width, adorns the plinth that forms the base of the altar. It is the most fragmented and therefore also the least clear-cut in its surface significance and consequently in any possible ideological substratum. The reconstruction is based on but five fragments belonging to two figures, which clearly depict females garbed in the chiton and peplos who, as Kähler puts it, "may have been personifications of all the virtues which formed the essence of the Pax Romana, such as Pietas, Clementia, Iustitia, Concordia and Aequitas."[77] His interpretation seems sound, especially as the postures and the costumes (Figure 2) suggest neither Amazons nor goddesses of the Minerva-type. Interestingly enough, Cicero's concept of the *Pax Romana*, as cited by Kähler,[78] would tend to support these reconstructions as virtues integral to the prosperity that we can recognize as the product, *par excellence*, of the third function. In short, while the evidence is not indisputably conclusive, the large frieze does suggest the third function, that is, the promotion of physical well-being and the peaceful arts. Moreover, its size and position at the base of the altar, below the friezes which more clearly reflect the first and second functions, as well as its proportion to the population strength of each of the functional classes, suggests that the arrangement is not fortuitous, but rather mirrors the image of an older tradition of the functional unity and completeness of the world—and, from the Indo-European perspective, in the proper descending order.

It is also not fortuitous that the artist chose to represent this functional unity with female figures, namely Vestals, Amazons and Virtues. After all, what could be more appropriate for an altar

Plate 1. Ara Pacis: west front with stairway leading to altar (Fototeca).

Plate 2. Ara Pacis: north wall with senators and magistrates (Fototeca).

Plate 4. Ara Pacis: the Mars Panel, west front (Barbara Malter).

Plate 5. Ara Pacis: the Aeneas Panel, west front (Fototeca).

Plate 6. Ara Pacis: the east front showing Venus (Tellus/Italia) and Roma (Barbara

Plate 7. Ara Pacis: the altar table frieze with sacrificial animals (Barbara Malter).

Plate 8. Ara Pacis: the altar table frieze with Vestal Virgins (Fototeca).

dedicated to peace? Indeed, one cannot escape the impression that underlying this triad of friezes was the same characteristically Indo-European functionality we have already discovered elsewhere on the monument. Also, this triad is at once symbolic of the newly established peace—and, by extension, of the ideology of the third function—and of the unity of the world which the Emperor had pacified. In short, the sacrificial altar reveals a structure that appears to be a thoroughly appropriate, indeed canonical representation of the tripartite ideology.

The Ara Pacis and the Augustan Religious Restoration

Turning to the sacrifices at the *Ara Pacis*, we find that several explanations have been advanced about the nature and meaning of the ritual. Moretti interpreted the sacrificial scene on the altar table frieze as a representation of the *suovetaurīlia*, a ritual directed toward the ancestral god Mars on the Campus Martius and involving the triple immolation of a boar, a ram and a bull.[79] Undeniably, this was a sacrifice with deep Indo-European roots,[80] but his further suggestion that it was the central ritual performed at the *Ara Pacis* is untenable, as it has nothing specifically to do with peace. Ryberg has suggested that the animals depicted in the frieze are in fact a heifer, a steer and a sheep, beasts that were regularly offered, respectively, to Pax, Jupiter and Janus, and that the scene is an extension of the processions depicted on the outer walls (see above), anticipating the dedicatory sacrifice made in 9 B.C.[81] This proposal is, of course, also problematic.[82] However, at least it makes Pax the focal point of the activity, even if it is clear that the ritual pertains to an *ad hoc* cult without any discernible Indo-European reflexes.

More recently, however, Hanell has pointed out in his essay, which Torelli describes as "one of the finest analyses of the religious aspects of the *Ara Pacis*,"[83] that Augustus had erected images of Salus Publica, Concordia and Pax in 11 B.C.[84] While his hypothesis that reliefs of these were also located in the now fragmented western end of the southern frieze of the *Ara Pacis* still remains in doubt,[85] it has nonetheless been established that the three goddesses formed, along with Janus, a quaternity whose worship constituted an integral part of the socio-religious context into

which the *Ara Pacis* was situated.[86] Ovid, for example, speaks of
them in his *Fasti* as connected with the Altar of Peace.[87] It is there-
fore incumbent upon us to discuss these divinities, whether their
presence at the *Ara Pacis* was concretized in plastic imagery or not.

To the Romans these three goddesses were expressions of certain
basic aspects of their society. On coins of the period[88] we find each
of them associated, in turn, with objects symbolic of one or another
of the three fundamental Indo-European functions: they are found
holding a sacrificial vessel (first function), sitting atop a pile of
discarded weapons (second function), and holding a sheaf of wheat
and poppies (third function). All of them seem, thus, associated in-
terchangeably with all three functions, and it would appear that this
Salus, Pax, Concordia triad may conceivably be a replication of the
widespread Indo-European notion of the transfunctional goddess,
which Roman tradition preserved, *par excellence*, in the figure of the
Lavinian Juno, whose epithets Seispes, Mater, Regina represent
the second, third and first functions respectively.[89]

More to the point, it appears possible to identify each of these
figures with a specific Indo-European function. The most easily
recognizable personified abstraction is Concordia. Dumézil[90] ad-
duces evidence that places her in the operational zone of juridical
sovereignty: as an aspect of Dius Fidius who regulated relationships
among men, she embodied the mediating element leading to the
resolution of quarrels, and as such she may be considered first func-
tion. The other clearly identifiable figure is Salus Publica, the
Romanized form of the third-function Greek *Hygieia*.[91] That leaves
Pax and a major problem, for she appears to represent the very an-
tithesis of the second function. First, the name is of ancient Um-
brian vintage and designates normal and benevolent relations.
Second, the closing of the doors of the temple of Janus when Rome
was not at war represented the desire to keep peace from escaping.
And third, at the time of Augustus, Peace was clearly third
function—a "Quirinal Peace." To infer from these facts, however,
that Pax could therefore not play a second-function role would be
to misunderstand wholly the peculiar functional interrelationships
that existed at Rome. Consider that, in practice, the social units
known as *quirites* and *milites* did not represent different classes of
men as had the Indic *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya*, but comprised rather the

same people exhibiting different modes of organizational behavior depending on whether Rome was at war or at peace. The Roman was the quintessential "citizen soldier," *quirinal* in peacetime, *martial* in war. And this applied also to the gods. Servius on *Aeneid* 6:860 identifies a bifunctional Mars "qui praeest paci" and a "belli Mars." The latter manifestation is mirrored by another Roman paradox, the third-function "arma Quirini."[92] In short, what we have here are opposite sides of the same coin: Pax cannot exist apart from the concept of war, and therefore she represents the second function by its express absence!

That this triad of personified abstractions, along with Janus, comprises an integral unit may be discerned from Ovid.[93] And this serves as an important piece of corroborative evidence for the Indo-Europeanness of the structure of these three goddesses, inasmuch as Ovid's song in praise of the *Ara Pacis*[94] strikes a suspiciously tripartite note, knitting the arms (of the soldier—second function), the incense (of the priests—first function), and the house ("which is the warranty of peace"—third function) into a single unified pattern. The fact that Augustus would offer sacrifice to these goddesses shows not only his conscious appeal to the peace, harmony and prosperity that they were generally assumed to portray, but it also reveals the lingering elements of a much older heritage.

Augustan Propaganda and Indo-European Echoes

As the foregoing excursus in ideological archaeology indicates, the overall layout of adornment of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* reflects *two* complementary ideological systems, the ancient Indo-European heritage and the apparent achievement of a "universal" world order under the benevolent authority of Rome, which, as Momigliano[95] and Weinstock[96] have pointed out, was the essential element in the concept of *pax*. Their attestable symbolic blending is thoroughly consistent with the central thrust of the Augustan religious restoration. As Dumézil[97] puts it in a discussion of this phase in the evolution of Roman religious ideas:

> The best proof of the existence of the gods is Rome herself, her past, her present, and the good fortune which the future obviously has in store for her. ... The religious restoration by Augustus is solidly based on this common sense idea.

The overall plan of the *Ara Pacis*, on which these ideological systems are for the most part axially oriented,[98] reflects this concern with the past, present and future on an east-west axis.
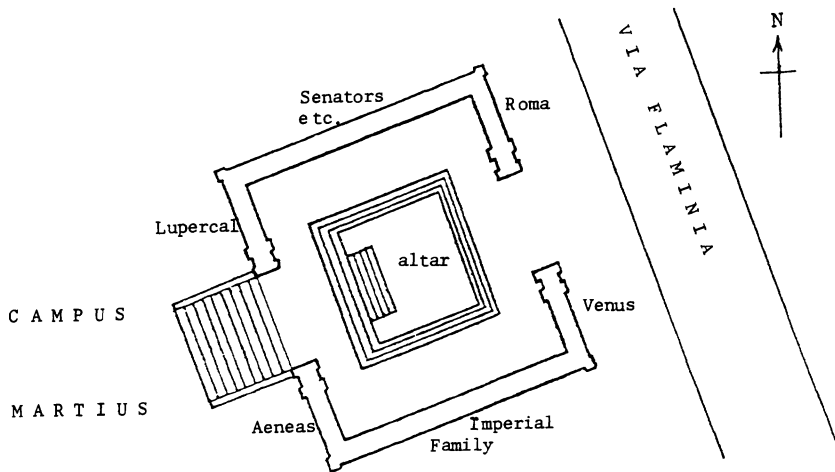
Figure 3. Ara Pacis: plan of reliefs on exterior walls (after Toynbee, "Ara Pacis Reconsidered," p. 76).

The western facade, through which the priest must enter, symbolizes the past—or better, perhaps, the mythologized past. The panels on either side of the doorway contain scenes relating to the mythological foundation, respectively, of Italy (south side) and Rome (north side).[99] Moreover, by turning his back on the field of Mars, the priest embodies the assumption that warfare itself is now a thing of the past.

The present is symbolized by the contemporary and for the most part easily recognizable figures depicted on the north and south walls.[100] Indeed, the effect here is almost photographic, for the artist has captured the group at a specific moment in time.[101] If Moretti, Kähler, and Hanell are correct in assuming that the friezes in question portray the *constitutio* of 13 B.C., the moment depicted was a sacred one, although, as Torelli has shown, it depicts an idealized "meeting that could have taken place" rather than a strictly historical event.[102] The ritual itself served to sym-

bolize the transition from the Mars-dominated past to the glorious
and peaceful future that would unfold under Augustus and his suc-
cessors.

That future is symbolized by the iconography of the east front,
which centers on images of Venus and Roma enjoying the bounty
that is to come, thanks to the Emperor and his achievements. The
sacrificial altar, midway between the "past" and the "future,"
serves to mediate these two concepts.

The north-south axial orientation, represented both in the make-
up of the two great procession friezes on the north and south walls
and in the placement of the panels on the east and west fronts,
reflects the Augustan ideology of a unity between Roma and
Venus/Italia, that is, between the city and its hinterland, between
the achievements of Romulus and Remus (the children of Mars)
and those of Aeneas (the offspring of Venus). Indeed, this north-
Rome, south-Venus/Italy symbolism seems to be replicated on the
north and south walls in the well-known images of Augustus'
grandsons. On the south wall, Gaius, the eldest son of the
Emperor's son-in-law Agrippa, is shown clutching his father's toga,
and was perhaps intended to be a contemporary symbol of Ascanius
(or Iulus), the legendary ancestor of the Julian *gens*.[103] It is note-
worthy that young Gaius is dressed as a Trojan. Another grandson,
Lucius, is depicted on the north wall and can be interpreted as a
symbol of the young Romulus. It is significant that the Emperor,
who was himself *not* a Roman, and his family appear on the *south*
wall and are thus identified with his ancestress Venus and the land
of Italy (and its implied extensions) rather than with the more
specifically Roman figures (i.e. on the north wall and the im-
mediately adjacent panels on the west and east fronts). Thus, the
sacrificial altar, which lies at the intersection of these two axes and
on which the *sacerdotes* made offerings to Pax (inter alia),[104] once
again emerges not only as the mediating point between the several
oppositions just noted—that is, between past and future, Imperial
Family and the Roman Establishment—, but also as the focal point
of the message proclaiming the *Pax Augusta*.

The combined Augustan complex in the Campus Martius ex-
presses this same symbolism in its layout and function. Comment-
ing on the solarium and *Ara Pacis* together, Buchner recognized that

"Diese Anlage ist sozusagen das Horoskop des neuen Herrschers, riesig in den Ausmassen und auf kosmische Zusammenhänge deutend."[105] Its significance derived from important dates in the life of the Emperor. On the winter solstice, the day of his conception at the beginning of the sign of Capricorn, the solarium confirmed that the sun would reverse its course and ascend again. On September 23, Augustus' birthday, the shadow of the orb atop the obelisk (itself representing the terrestrial orb and symbolic of rule over a pacified world) traced the straight equinoxial line directly to the heart of the *Ara Pacis*, thus connecting his birth with *pax* and providing visible confirmation that he was "natus ad pacem."

When, however, we look at the axial orientations of the Altar's friezes from the perspective of the more ancient ideological system whose echoes we have already seen emerge from beneath the Augustan propaganda, we find that they reflect arrangements that are of significance in terms of the tripartite Indo-European functions.

On the east-west axis that ideology is expressed primarily in the opposition between the Via Flaminia, as incipit of the sacred procession devoted to Pax, and its terminus the Campus Martius upon which the assembly turned its back to attend to the sacrifice at the *ara*. This proceeding reflects the very ancient tension between the first and second functions.[106] It is thus not fortuitous that on the monument itself the principal Indo-European expressions are to be found on the east and west fronts.

On the western facade, we found that Aeneas belongs to the first function, Mars to the second, and the infant twin founders of Rome personify the third function of fertility. Moving to the eastern facade, Roma is both second and third, while Venus/Italia belongs unequivocally to the third function. As for the seeming absence of the first function, it should be recalled that, just as on the western side, so on the eastern the doorway once again mediates the functions embodied in the Roma and Venus/Italia panels, for through it was visible the most sacred object of the monument: the sacrificial altar, an indisputable symbol of the first function. Thus, the sovereign function is very much in evidence here as well.

In fact, Schäfer has observed that the reliefs on the front facing the Via Flaminia, with the inclusion of the altar, constitute an

iconographic triptych.[107] He perceived this significance, of course, only in terms of the Augustan propaganda. As we have already discovered, however, not only does the eastern front of the monument bear a reflection of the Indo-European trifunctional ideology, but it displays that ideology in the form of a double triptych: horizontally as second, first and third function, respectively, in the images of Roma, the priest at the altar, and Venus/Italia, and vertically in descending canonical order in the three friezes carved on the altar table, pedestal and plinth visible through the open doorway. From the overall layout and arrangement of its exterior reliefs, to the worship of some of the deities associated with it, then, the *Ara Pacis* emerges as a structure permeated with Indo-European ideological significance.

Rather than select our own groupings and axial alignments of friezes and run the risk of subjectively ''discovering'' some ''significant'' ideological patterns, however, we have followed the schemes suggested by scholars like Schäfer, who have had, to the best of our knowledge, no interest in Indo-European symbolism or in probing for its substratal remnants. Yet it is precisely from beneath the oppositions and alignments of friezes which Kähler, Schäfer, Hanell, Torelli and Settis have deemed significant as bearers of Augustan iconographic messages that there has emerged, in the course of our excursus through ideological archaeology, this heretofore concealed Indo-European substratum. The fact that some of these alignments of friezes appear in the canonical order of their Indo-European symbolism reinforces the likelihood that we are dealing here not with a fortuitous resemblance, but a true underlying Indo-European aspect of this architectural complex.

It would be incorrect to characterize this substratum as the ''survival'' of an earlier ideology, for although some of the art of the *Ara Pacis* may demonstrably be a continuation of forms traceable to Pergamon and Athens, its otherwise characteristically Indo-European ideology belongs to no such iconographic canon. There is no unbroken chain of monumental reliefs linking it with the dim past. This substratum of Indo-European ideology is rather an echo—a subconscious remembrance by the planners of this Augustan complex—of an earlier consciousness from a time when the ancestors of the Romans tended to compartmentalize their

world according to the triad of functions. Embodied in this Indo-European substratum, as in the overburden of Augustan propaganda, is the overarching theme of the *Pax Augusta* which the Emperor had brought not only to Rome, but to Italy and to the Empire as a whole.

The Ara Pacis as a Crystallized Cognitive Map

From the standpoint of contemporary anthropological theory, the *Ara Pacis Augustae* can be described as a crystallized cognitive map, a visible set of reference points in terms of which the Romans of the period could orient themselves to the world their Emperor had recently shaped. As Spradley,[108] Frake,[109] Wallace,[110] Furbee and Benfer[111] and a host of other adherents of what is generally referred to as ''cognitive anthropology''[112] have pointed out, such mental maps are everywhere fundamental features of man's consciousness; by definition, they impose order on an otherwise inchoate world and, as a result, serve to orient both the attitudes and behavioral patterns of those who share them.

For the most part, cognitive maps must be elicited from a wide variety of linguistic and behavioral data, that is, from the contents of myths, legends and folk tales, as well as from the taxonomies and paradigms people bring to bear in defining specific aspects of their social and natural circumstances. Indeed, it was from such sources that Dumézil derived the cognitive model that constitutes the tripartite Indo-European *idéologie*.

On rare occasions a culture manages successfully to crystallize its map in the form of a monument. Borubudur, the great eighth-century Buddhist stūpa in central Java, which expresses, in microcosm, the entire range of Creation, in such a monument. The *Ara Pacis* is another. Like the Javanese example, the *Ara Pacis* provided a guide not only to the past, but to the present and future as well. Thus the interface of vestigial Indo-European, indigenous Roman and propagandistic Augustan images, as well as those reflecting the transition from a warlike past to a peaceful and bountiful future, all of which are mediated by the central altar table, provides a map of the world as surely as anything that ever issued from the hand of a cartographer. Only in this case it is the mental

world shared by those persons whose faces remain visible on the
north and south walls, those members of the Roman Establishment
who so confidently participated in what they assumed, in 13 B.C.,
was the memorialization of a universal peace under the hegemony
of their city and expressed in accordance with the substratal residue
of recognizably tripartite principles already ancient when their
ancestors first arrived in central Italy.

That the cognitive map embedded in the layout and iconography
of the *Ara Pacis* was eventually superseded, and that the harmonious
world order it attempted to express did not last indefinitely should
not blind us to the ideological significance of this most remarkable
of Augustan artistic achievements.

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¹ *Res gestae divi Augusti* 12, trans. Frederick W. Shipley, The Loeb Classical
Library; Salvatore Settis, "The Altar of Peace," trans. John Shepley, *FMR*
[Franco Maria Ricci], no. 8 (January 1985), pp. 89-116.
² Paul MacKendrick, *The Muted Stones Speak: The Story of Archaeology in Italy* (New
York: St. Martin's Press, 1960), p. 102.
³ Guiseppe Moretti, *The Ara Pacis Augustae*, trans. Veronica Priestley (Rome:
Librario dello Stato, 1939); and *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Rome: Librario dello Stato,
1948).

   [4] For detailed observations on the native Italo-Roman character of the art and architecture of the *Ara Pacis*, see Theodor Kraus, *Die Ranken der Ara Pacis: ein Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der augusteischen Ornamentik* (Berlin: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 1953); Heinz Kähler, "Die Front der Ara Pacis," in *Neue Beiträge zur klassischen Altertumswissenschaft: Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Bernhard Schweitzer*, ed. Reinhard Lullies (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1954), p. 323; W. Lübke-Pernice, *Die Kunst der Römer*, ed. Berta Sarne (Vienna: Paul Neff, 1958), pp. 238-40, 244; G. Karl Galinsky, "Venus in a Relief of the Ara Pacis Augustae," *AJA* 70 (1966): 229, 236; Gerhard Koeppel, "The Pictorial Tradition in Roman Historical Reliefs," *AJA* 78 (1974): 170; and Adolf H. Borbein, "Die Ara Pacis Augustae: geschichtliche Wirklichkeit und Programm," *JdI* 90 (1975): 250-51, 261, 266. Regarding interpretation, Galinsky (p. 224) has pointed out that the art of the *Ara Pacis* is primarily symbolic, and its iconography has several levels of meaning. Mario Torelli, *Typology and Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1982), sees the architecture of the structure as possessing a triumphal, an augural and a janiform significance (p. 36), the multivalent decorations as interpretable on political, cosmic or religious levels (p. 42). Settis distinguishes an "official" and a "popular" perspective (p. 99), also a historical and a symbolic one (p. 105).

   [5] The eminent French scholar Georges Dumézil has demonstrated that the ancient Indo-European speaking communities shared a common tripartite ideology based on three canonical principles or "functions." At the apex of this ideology was the "first function," or the maintenance of cosmic or juridical sovereignty; next came the "second function," or the exercise of military prowess and other activities associated with warfare; at the base of the system was the "third function," that is, all those phemomena and activities associated with the provision of nourishment, the maintenance of physical well-being, health, wealth, etc. These three "functions" pervade the ancient Indo-European pantheons and mythological texts, from the Icelandic *Eddas* to the Indian *Vedas*, and are also expressed in the structure of society itself (e.g., the three Aryan or "twice-born" castes of classical and later India) as well as in the behavior of heroes and demigods, such as may be found in Roman pseudo-history (e.g., the early sections of Livy's *History*) and the ancient Indian epical texts (e.g., the *Mahābhārata*). For a comprehensive overview of his theories and methods, see his *L'idéologie tripartite des Indo-Européens* (Brussels: Collection Latomus, 1958); *Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus: essai sur la conception indo-européenne de la société et sur les origines de Rome* (Paris: Gallimard, 1941); and C. Scott Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology: An Anthropological Assessment of the Theories of Georges Dumézil*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

   [6] Lucien Gerschel, "Structures augurales et tripartition fonctionelle dans la pensée de l'ancienne Rome," *JPNP* 45 (1952): 57-78.

   [7] That substratum, of course, included more than the echo we are attempting to "excavate" in this paper. For example, the *Flāmines maiores*, who play a prominent part in the iconography of the *Ara Pacis* (Torelli, p. 45), and who, as Dumézil long ago pointed out, clearly reflect the tripartite ideology, were still the most sacred priestly college at the time of Augustus; see Georges Dumézil, *Flāmen-Brahman*, Annales du Musée Guimet, vol. 51 (Paris: 1935), and *Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus: essai sur la conception indo-européenne de la société et sur les origines de Rome* (Paris: Gallimard, 1941). Indeed, the functional differentiation among the *Flāmen dialis*, the *Flāmen martialis*, and the *Flāmen quirinalis* can be considered a survival rather than merely an echo of the Indo-European heritage.

⁸ Suetonius, *De vita caesarum* 2. 100.

⁹ Edmund Buchner, "Solarium Augusti und Ara Pacis," *RömMitt* 83 (1976): 319-65.

¹⁰ Erika Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphics Society Ltd., 1968), p. 8.

¹¹ Torelli, p. 29.

¹² Maximilian Schäfer, "Zum Tellusbild auf der Ara Pacis Augustae," *Gymnasium* 66 (1959): 289; Erik Welin, "Die beiden Festtage der Ara Pacis Augustae," *Dragma*, Acta Instituti Romani Regni Sueciae, series altera 1 (Lund: G. W. K. Gleerup, 1939): 500-513.

¹³ Eugen Petersen, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, Sonderschriften des österreichischen archäologischen Instituts, vol. 2 (Vienna: 1902), p. 176.

¹⁴ Guglielmo Gatti, review of "L'*Ara Pacis* ed il *Solarium Augusti* nella fantasia medioevale," by G. Marchetti-Longhi, *Bullettino della commissione archeologica del governatorato di Roma e Bullettino del museo dell' imperio romano* 68 (1940): 266.

¹⁵ Torelli (p. 58 n. 33) had expressed scepticism, but the validity of Buchner's thesis has been confirmed by recent excavations: see Buchner, "Horologium solarium Augusti: Vorbericht über die Ausgrabungen 1979/80," *RömMitt* 87 (1980): 355-73.

¹⁶ Buchner, "Solarium," p. 344.

¹⁷ For details on the *Ara Pacis* as an instrument of Augustan propaganda, see Lübke-Pernice, pp. 238, 244; Schäfer, p. 293; Galinsky, p. 223; Simon, p. 25; Borbein, pp. 249, 261-65; Torelli, pp. 52-55; Settis, pp. 106-110; Janice M. Benario, "Book 4 of Horace's *Odes*: Augustan Propaganda," *TPAPA* 91 (1960): 345-49.

¹⁸ Some slabs bearing reliefs (the Venus/Italia panel and part of the south wall frieze) were accidentally discovered in 1568 in the course of excavating the foundations of the Palazzo Peretti (Moretti [1939], pp. 3-5). In 1859, while reinforcing the foundation of the Palazzo Ottoboni, more fragments came to light, including the sacrifice of Aeneas and the head of Mars (all west side). In 1879 these pieces were recognized by Aurelio Visconti, Ennio Visconti and Frederick von Duhn as belonging to the *Ara Pacis*. In 1894 Eugen Petersen began the systematic study of the fragments, and, in 1903, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, the site was systematically excavated by Angiolo Pasqui. In 1937 the Ministry commissioned Moretti to undertake further excavations and to restore the monument using modern techniques (MacKendrick, pp. 156-62).

¹⁹ The references to the sides given here are always in terms of the original positioning of the structure, not the reconstruction.

²⁰ Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, p. 9; Torelli, pp. 30-35. Until recently it was firmly believed that the art and architecture of the *Ara Pacis* was heavily indebted to the Greeks. The overall plan appeared to have been adopted from the Altar of Pity in the Athenian agora (see primarily Homer A. Thompson, "The Altar of Pity in the Athenian Agora," *Hesperia* 21[1952]: 79-82), while much of the artistry betrays influence by the great altar of Zeus at Pergamon (C. Börker, "Neuattisches und Pergamenisches an den Ara Pacis-Ranken," *JdI* 88 [1975]: 88; Jocelyn M. C. Toynbee, "The Ara Pacis Reconsidered and Historical Art in Roman Italy," *ProcBritAc*39 [1953]: 67-95). The studies of Simon and Torelli have demonstrated, however, that although the actual workmanship may have been executed by Hellenistic craftsmen, the plan and basic architectural features resemble closely those of Roman augural temples and the temple of Janus Quirinus in the Forum. See also Diana E. E. Kleiner, "The Great Friezes of the Ara Pacis

Augustae: Greek Sources, Roman Derivatives and Augustan Social Policy,''
MélÉcFrRome 90 (1978): 753-76.

[21] The *dedicatio* of the *Ara Pacis* appears to have been delayed until the doors of
this temple had been closed for the third time in Augustus' reign, probably in early
January of 9 B.C.; see Krister Hanell, "Das Opfer des Augustus and der *Ara
Pacis*: eine archäologische und historische Untersuchung," *OpRom* 2 (1960): 102.
Buchner ("Solarium," pp. 358-60), however, attributes the delay to the need for
making solar observations for plotting the grid of the solarium.

[22] In addition to the already cited works by Kraus and Börker, special studies
on these decorations can also be found in Hans Peter L'Orange, "Ara Pacis
Augustae: La zona floreale," *ActInstRomNorv* 1 (1962): 7-16; and Hermann Büs-
ing, "Ranke und Figur an der Ara Pacis Augustae," *ArchAnz* 16 (1977): 247-57.

[23] E.g. Moretti (1948); Heinz Kähler, "Die Ara Pacis und die augusteische
Friedensidee," *JdI* 69 (1954): 67-100.

[24] The three *Flāmines maiores*, that is, the *Flāmen dialis, Flāmen martialis* and
Flāmen quirinalis, whom Dumézil has often pointed to as prime Roman reflections
of the tripartite ideology (Littleton, p. 136), are indeed present, their number
augmented by the newly created *Flāmen iulialis*, who attended to the cult of Julius
Caesar. In the order of march, the latter figure appears to be the one in the
background between the *martialis* and the *quirinalis*.

[25] Heinz Kähler, *The Art of Rome and Her Empire*, trans. J. R. Foster (New York:
Greystone Press, 1963), p. 75.

[26] Hanell, pp. 71-74, 95-99. Although the differences between the groups on the
north and south friezes seem obvious—the north wall appears clearly to be peopled
by members of the Roman establishment (i.e. Senators, magistrates, etc.), while
the figures on the south wall, including the Imperial entourage, seem more related
to the Empire as a whole—, Hanell insists that there is no clear distinction because
the participants are here not in terms of the secular, but rather religious offices
which they hold. The artist's intention was simply to portray, from two perspec-
tives, a single crowd of dignitaries, most of whom are facing west. Galinsky (p.
226) concurs that the processional columns have stopped, and even Kähler
("Front der Ara Pacis," p. 324) and Borbein (pp. 252, 254) agree. Henry T.
Rowell, *Rome in the Augustan Age*, (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press,
1962), p. 220, suggests that the artist has caught the participants at a moment
when movement had stopped and the form and order of the procession had disap-
peared.

[27] Jocelyn M. C. Toynbee, "The Ara Pacis Augustae," *JRS* 51 (1961): 153-56;
Borbein, pp. 254-55 n. 48.

[28] Luigi Polacco, "La festa della pace nell'Ara Pacis: studio di ermeneutica
figurata," *AttiIstVenScLettArti* 119 (1960/61): 641; Jean-Claude Richard, "Pax,
Concordia et la religion officielle de Janus à la fin de la république romaine,"
MélÉcFrRome 75 (1963): 303-386; Erika Simon, "Das neugefundene Bildnis des
Gaius Caesar in Mainz," *MainzZeitschr* 58 (1963): 9; Galinsky, p. 242 n. 67. While
disagreeing with Kähler, Torelli (pp. 44, 53) nevertheless connects the three
statues of Salus, Pax and Concordia dedicated at the *Janus Quirinus* in 11 B.C. with
the formal *dedicatio* of the *Ara Pacis* in 9 B.C.

[29] Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, p. 16, rejects the Salus, Pax, Concordia hypothesis
altoghether. Although Richard (p. 359) had come to the same conclusion as Simon
in disagreeing with Hanell's reconstruction of the western end of the southern
frieze, his affirmation of the existence of an Augustan cult devoted to the divine
quaternity of Janus, Salus, Pax, Concordia reinforces the probability that it was

indeed these divinities who on March 30 were collective recipients of a common sacrifice on the Campus Martius. Richard further situates each of these divinities in a traditional context whose interpretation is entirely consistent with our Indo-European trifunctional model. Thus, Janus is sovereign by virtue of his role in the expression *Janus Quirinus*, which recalls the assimilation of Romulus to Quirinus and defines a god at the borders of things who is at home in each of the functions (p. 372). More to the point, Richard adduces a polythetic scheme that correlates the divine pair Pax-Concordia with the binary titles Imperator-Pontifex Maximus borne by some of Augustus' dictatorial predecessors. Perceiving that Pax is related to Imperator as Concordia is to Pontifex Maximus, Richard is then able to conclude that (in this context) Pax represents military victory while Concordia embodies the secular piety of the law-abiding citizen (pp. 332-33). In Richard's words, "C'est sous le signe de *Concordia Nova* et de sa propre invincibilité que le dictateur place sa monarchie; déesse elle-même, la Concorde devient inséparable du dieu vivant qui l'invoque en même temps qu'il en instaure le règne" (p. 357). Translating this into the terminology of the Indo-European comparativist, this makes Pax second function and Concordia first function. As for Salus Publica, she embraces her two divine sisters as their synthesis (p. 348), a task traditionally relegated to the third function.

[30] Hanell became aware of Kähler's reconstruction too late to include a discussion of it in his monograph.

[31] It has been a common procedure to interpret these reliefs on the basis of passages from the Augustan poets: e.g. E. Loewy, "Orazio ed 'Ara Pacis'," *Atti del 1° Congresso nazionale di studi romani* 1 (1929): 104-9; Henning Malmström, *Ara Pacis and Virgil's Aeneid: A Comparative Study* (Malmö: Sydsvenska dagbladets aktiebolag, I. Ivarson, 1963); George E. Duckworth, "The Architecture of the Aeneid," *AJP* 75 (1954): 1-15; Benario, op cit.; and statements by Schäfer (p. 301) and Galinsky (p. 237). On the advice of Torelli (p. 40), we have refrained from following that practice.

[32] Stefan Weinstock, "Pax and the 'Ara Pacis'," *JRS* 50 (1960): 57-58, disputes this interpretation, primarily on the grounds that the figure of Aeneas is not wearing armor and therefore is already king. Indeed, Weinstock is generally sceptical as to whether the monument reconstructed by Moretti, et al., is in fact the *Ara Pacis*, and suggests that von Duhn's discovery in 1879 (see note 18, above) has been uncritically accepted by subsequent scholars, including Moretti. This scepticism is *not* shared by the great majority of scholars who have studied the evidence discussed in this paper (e.g. Galinsky, p. 223; Borbein, p. 243 n. 1), and it has received formal rebuttals by Toynbee ("Ara Pacis Augustae") and L'Orange (p. 15).

[33] Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis," p. 325.

[34] Toynbee, "'Ara Pacis Augustae'," pp. 155-56; Hanell, p. 60.

[35] Torelli, p. 43; Settis, p. 105.

[36] Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis," p. 325; Borbein, p. 243.

[37] Thompson, p. 81.

[38] Inez Scott Ryberg, *Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art*, MAAR, vol. 22 (1955), pp. 40-41.

[39] As we have seen above, Georges Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, trans. Philip Krapp (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 262.

[40] See note 80, below.

[41] Cf. Edgar C. Polomé, "A Few Thoughts About Reconstructing Indo-European Culture and Religion," in *Language, Society and Paleoculture: Essays by*

Edgar C. Polomé, ed. Anwar S. Dil (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), pp. 302-6.

[42] Borbein, p. 242; Galinsky, p. 242.

[43] Kähler, *Art of Rome*, p. 57.

[44] Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis," p. 329; "Ara Pacis," p. 86.

[45] Richard, pp. 347-49; see also note 29, above.

[46] Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, pp. 29-30.

[47] Torelli, p. 38.

[48] Ulrich Knoche, "Die augusteische Ausprägung der Dea Roma," *Gymnasium* 59 (1952): 338.

[49] James H. Oliver, review of "Rom, Römertum und Imperium in der griechischen Literatur der Kaiserzeit," by Jonas Palm, *Gnomon* 32 (1960): 501; Knoche, p. 339.

[50] Schäfer, p. 295.

[51] Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis," p. 329, "Ara Pacis," p. 80.

[52] L'Orange, pp. 9, 11; Galinsky, pp. 237-43.

[53] Anne Booth, "Venus on the Ara Pacis," *Latomus* 25 (1966): 873-79; Galinsky, op. cit.

[54] Galinsky, pp. 241-43.

[55] Ibid., pp. 229-34.

[56] Hanell, p. 120.

[57] Benario, p. 342; Torelli, p. 42.

[58] Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis."

[59] Kähler, "Ara Pacis," p. 84.

[60] Buchner, "Solarium," p. 346.

[61] Erwin Bielefeld, "Bemerkungen zu den kleinen Friesen am Altar der Ara Pacis Augustae," *RömMitt* 74 (1967); 260-61.

[62] Schäfer, p. 291.

[63] Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis," p. 327.

[64] Schäfer, p. 294.

[65] Knoche, p. 339.

[66] Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis," p. 329.

[67] The suggestion by Herbert Koch in his review of "Die Ranken der Ara Pacis," by Theodor Kraus, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 76 (1955): 50, that the extant example may be a later replacement of a damaged original, has failed to find support. See also Bielefeld, p. 259.

[68] The only one who has criticised Kähler's reconstruction is Torelli (pp. 35-36), and even though he prefers to think of these fragments as belonging to a scene showing the goddess Pax with attendant retinue, he does not rule out Kähler's idea entirely. Moreover, Settis has subsequently argued quite convincingly that there was no graphic portrait of Pax on the Altar.

[69] *Res gestae* 12.

[70] Bielefeld, pp. 261-63.

[71] Ryberg, *Rites*, pp. 40-43, 47.

[72] Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, p. 173.

[73] Dumézil, *L'idéologie tripartite*, pp. 34-36.

[74] Kähler, "Ara Pacis," p. 83.

[75] Ibid., and *Art of Rome*, p. 76.

[76] Hans Lucas, "Die Reliefs der Neptunsbasilica in Rom," *JdI* 15 (1900): 29. As Kähler points out in "Ara Pacis," p. 85, similar Amazon images, also symbolizing the various provinces, can be found on the famous Primaporta statue and on Hadrian's tomb.

[77] Kähler, *Art of Rome*, p. 68. The additional virtues of *copia, faustitas, securitas* are suggested by Kähler, "Front der Ara Pacis," p. 328, and Schäfer, p.294.

[78] "Ara Pacis," p. 82. It is interesting to note that Cicero's actual language in this passage is remarkably redolent in structure to the tripartite ideology of the Indo-Europeans. In *Pro Sestio* 98 he itemizes the essential components of ideal peace as follows: "religiones, auspicia, potestates magistratuum, senatus auctoritas, leges, mos maiorum, iudicia, iuris dictio, fides, provinciae, socii, imperii laus, res militaris, aerarium." Thus, we have here a list that encompasses both the magico-religious and juridical halves of the first function in their many aspects, followed by the second-function *res militaris* and financed from the third-function *aerarium*. Cicero, *The Speeches Pro Sestio and In Vatinum*, with an English translation by R. Gardner, The Loeb Classical Library, pp. 168-71.

[79] Moretti (1939), pp. 12-14.

[80] As Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, pp. 237-39, points out, the Roman *suovetaurīlia* closely parallels the Vedic *sautrāmanī* sacrifice, in which three beasts, a goat, a ram and a bull, are offered to Indra *Sutrāman*, or "Indra the Good Protector." Like Mars, Indra here appears as tutelary divinity of all the Indian people, for the sacrifice is tripartite and its recipient thereby becomes a panfunctional sovereign. However, neither the *suovetaurīlia* nor the *sautrāmanī* were specifically related to the concept of peace. For a more detailed discussion of Indo-European animal sacrifice, see Jaan Puhvel, "Victimal Hierarchies in Indo-European Animal Sacrifice," *AJP* 99 (1978): 354-62.

[81] "The Procession of the Ara Pacis," *MAAR* 19 (1949): 89-92; *Rites*, p. 42. See also Toynbee, "Ara Pacis Reconsidered," p. 74; Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, pp. 14-15.

[82] Moretti (1948), p. 282.

[83] Torelli, p. 59 n. 63.

[84] Hanell, p. 95.

[85] Torelli, p. 44; see also notes 27 and 28, above.

[86] Richard, op. cit.

[87] *Fasti* 1. 715-722.

[88] Hanell, pp. 103-117.

[89] Georges Dumézil, "Juno S.M.R.," *Eranos* 52 (1954): 105-119, and *Archaic Roman Religion*, pp. 297-98. However, see also Jaan Puhvel, p. 359, who suggests that the order here should be first, third and second functions. The same sort of transfunctionality is also reflected in Hellenistic tradition by the goddess Athena—who in the *Inscriptiones Graecae* 2(1).163 is characterized as being at once the embodiment of *Polias* or civic order (first function), *Nike* or victory (second function), and *Hygieia*, a patroness of health and welfare (third function) (F. Vian, *La guerre des géants: le mythe avant l'époque hellénistique* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952])—and in Irish mythology by the trio of Machas (Georges Dumézil, "Le trio des Macha," *RHR* 146 [1954]: 5-17).

[90] *Archaic Roman Religion*, pp. 400-406.

[91] Ibid., pp. 444, 195 n24.

[92] Ibid., pp. 133, 258-63, 322.

[93] *Fasti* 3. 879-882.

[94] *Fasti* 1. 715-722.

[95] Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Peace of the Ara Pacis," *JWCI* 5 (1942): 229.

[96] Weinstock, p. 45.

[97] *Archaic Roman Religion*, p. 509.

[98] Several scholars have attempted quite elaborate explanations in characterizing the patterns of oppositions or agreements between the various reliefs: Jocelyn

M. C. Toynbee, "Ara Pacis Reconsidered," p. 76; Kähler, "Ara Pacis," p. 80-81; Torelli, pp. 36-44; Settis, p. 106.

[99] Thompson. p. 80.

[100] For the latest in a long series of attempts at identifying the individual figures, see Torelli, pp. 44-52.

[101] Borbein, pp. 245, 260; Thompson, p. 80.

[102] Torelli, p. 54. For instance Agrippa, who appears in the center of the southern frieze, was absent from Rome in 13 B.C., and died the following year. For further details, see also Polacco, p. 639, and Borbein, pp. 243 n. 8, 260.

[103] Hanell, p. 81.

[104] Settis, p. 110.

[105] Buchner, "Solarium," pp. 346-47.

[106] Littleton, pp. 118-27; Georges Dumézil, *Heur et malheur du guerrier*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968).

[107] Schäfer, p. 294.

[108] James P. Spradley, "Foundations of Cultural Knowledge," in *Culture and Cognition: Rules, Maps and Plans*, ed. James P. Spradley (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1972).

[109] Charles O. Frake, "A Structural Description of Subanun 'Religious Behavior'," in *Explorations in Cultural Anthropology*, ed. Ward H. Goodenough (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

[110] Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Culture and Personality*, 2nd edtn. (New York: Random House, 1970).

[111] Luanna Furbee and Robert A. Benfer, "Cognitive and Geographic Maps: Study of Individual Variation Among Tojobal Mayans," *AA* 85 (1983): 303-334.

[112] Roger M. Keesing, "Theories of Culture," in *Language, Culture and Cognition*, ed. Ronald W. Casson (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974).

THE SOUND OF RELIGION

FRITS STAAL

I

Methodology of the Science of Ritual

This paper* discusses concepts and methodology that are re-
quired for the analysis of a ritual song. In the past, ritual songs have
been analysed by scholars of religion (e.g., van der Leeuw on
Bach's *Hohe Messe*) and by anthropologists (e.g., Raymond Firth in
Tikopia). In as far as I can see, neither type of analysis has been
successful; they have neither explained basic questions (e.g., why
are such songs sung?) nor thrown any light on specific details. I
found that different concepts and methods have to be used in order
to reach more satisfactory and promising results. These concepts
and methods are familiar in other domains of inquiry, are fairly
clear and intelligible, and will undoubtedly be adopted by scholars
of religion, anthropologists, and others, soner or later. In the pages
that follow I shall try to show that their time has come.

At the outset, my approach to the study of ritual may appear to
be closer to anthropological approaches than to those that have
been adopted by scholars of religion; but it is different from
behavioristic, functionalist and structuralist anthropologies and
from the "symbolic anthropology" that is inspired by hermeneutics
and that is now America's favorite. Since this area of research tends
to get entangled in conceptual confusions, I shall start with some
remarks on methodology, specifically on the methodology of
science.

Few anthropologists and very few students of religion have recog-
nized the relevance of the methodology of science for the conceptual
clarifications that are so badly needed. An exception is Milton
Singer, and his analysis will provide us with a good point of depar-
ture. The methodology of science is generally regarded as a shady
discipline, on a par with all those apparently endless discussions on

method, theory and foundations that are so often—and with good reason—frowned upon by fieldworkers, and further suspect because of its original links with positivism, for this discipline was brought to Chicago by philosophers who had been closely related to the Vienna Circle. Rudolf Carnap, for example, came from Vienna and Prague to Chicago, where he taught from 1935 till 1952 and where he edited, together with Otto Neurath and Charles W. Morris, the *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*. At Chicago, semantics was accordingly discussed and developed a quarter of a century before the emergence of what Edmund Leach has called the "Chicago dogma," namely, that "cultures are systems of symbols and meanings" (Leach 1985, 156). Singer's methodology of science is not the same as that of the Chicago philosophers with whom he studied, nor is it of the same variety as the one to which I myself was exposed by my teacher Evert Beth in Amsterdam; but the similarities are sufficient for me to feel at home when I am reading or listening to him. Moreover, they remind me not only of Amsterdam but also of Madras—the city in which both Singer and I did fieldwork (albeit of a different type) and where we both derived benefit from the guidance and vast erudition of the same Indian scholar, the late Professor V. Raghavan.

The XVth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) takes me back to the same two cities. The IAHR was founded when a series of international congresses for the history of religions, which had been interrupted by the Second World War, was resumed in 1950 at Amsterdam. The 1950 congress was devoted primarily to a discussion of the "mythical-ritual pattern in civilization" (cf. Bleeker, Drewes and Hidding 1951). It was there that, as a young student of mathematics and logic, I remained unimpressed by most of the self-styled phenomologists (e.g., Mircea Eliade, E. O. James, Karl Kerényi, H. W. Schneider) but was inspired by Gerardus van der Leeuw (then Congress President), A. D. Nock, Raffaele Pettazzoni, T. M. P. Mahadevan (whom I later followed to Madras), and especially Henri-Charles Puech and Louis Massignon.

Subsequent decades witnessed the gradual replacement of that galaxy of scholars of religion by methodologists of a kind different from the Vienna or Chicago variety, who emerged not from depart-

ments of science, philosophy, philology, history or Oriental studies,
but from departments of religion often affiliated with religious in-
stitutions. In place of the search for objective truth and the con-
comitant emphasis on methodology, a strong sound of religion
itself, with its stock-in-trade of persuasions and organizations,
began to pervade and even drown out the science of religion (an ap-
pellation I shall continue to use optimistically and as a rough ap-
proximation of the German *Religionswissenschaft* or the French
sciences religieuses). This development went easily hand in hand with
a pseudo-methodology inspired by continental philosophy, that
denied to the study of religion the status of a science on the basis
of the belief that religion cannot be studied objectively—which im-
plies that it cannot by studied at all. And so I decided to address
myself to what I regard as the *real* sound of religion, the sound that
constitutes one of the *objects* of the science of religion, the sound one
hears in the call of clarions and gongs, chants, recitations and ritual
songs. This sound is akin to the music of the spheres about which
Porphyry said that it cannot be heard by those whose minds are
small (*Life of Pythagoras*, Chapter 30). But is also requires a theory
and an adequate methodology for its analysis, and since the science
of religion has provided neither, it becomes relevant to turn once
more to anthropology and to Milton Singer.

Singer distinguishes between *semiology* and *semiotics*, disciplines
which he associates with the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the
philosopher Charles Peirce, respectively. I have not been able to
make much use of these two disciplines insofar as I understand
them, but I do pay attention to what I shall refer to by the general
term *semantics*, a science of meaning (including sense and reference)
traditionally studied and developed by logicans such as Aristotle,
Frege, Gödel and Tarski. Singer also uses the distinction between
syntax and *semantics*; or rather, he splits semiotics into three com-
ponents: "syntactics," "semantics," and "pragmatics." In the
above-mentioned review, Leach states that he regards this split into
three components as "unhelpful to say the least" (1985, 155).
Perhaps this is partly or mainly due to the addition of pragmatics,
a component that plays an important part in semiotics, especially
as Singer has described it (1984, 5-6, 48-52). I shall therefore begin
with a few remarks on pragmatics, for although this field of studies

has never turned into a broadly recognized discipline, it addresses real problems: in particular, how to determine the truth value of sentences that contain "indexical terms," "egocentric particulars," or "token-reflexives" (in the words of Peirce, Bertrand Russell, and Hans Reichenbach, respectively) such as "you," "here," or "yesterday." Carnap initially considered pragmatics an empirical field of investigation (Carnap 1936-1937) but subsequently dealt with its theoretical foundations (Carnap 1947), following which the field was developed as a formal system by logicians such as H. Kamp, D. Lewis, R. M. Martin, D. Scott, R. Stalnaker and especially Richard Montague (1968, 1970: reprinted in Thomason 1974). I myself related pragmatics to J. L. Austin's "performatives" and attempted a linguistic analysis of one of its characteristic features (Staal 1970a).

Pragmatic notions were current in classical antiquity as well as in ancient India; they are undoubtedly here to stay. At the same time, the status of pragmatics as a science has so far remained undetermined; in fact, it may be argued that, outside the domain of formal logic, pragmatics died in Jerusalem (Staal 1971). What may be true of pragmatics, however, is certainly not true of syntax and semantics. These two disciplines represent basically different approaches in mathematics, logic and linguistics. We shall see that the distinction between syntax and semantics is as fundamental to the analysis of ritual song as it is to the analysis of language; from which it does not follow, however, that ritual songs *are* language— and I shall indeed argue that they are not.

The distinction between syntax and semantics may seem so elementary as to require no further explanation. Yet, given that most scholars of religion simply ignore it and that a respected anthropologist such as Sir Edmund Leach appears to regard it as unhelpful, at least to anthropology, it may not be superfluous to say a few words about it (for a fuller explanation see Staal 1984a, 19 ff.). Following Morris and Montague, we may distinguish syntax and semantics by contrasting their primary concerns: syntax is concerned with relations between (logical or linguistic) expressions, and semantics with the relations between such expressions and their meanings. (Pragmatics is concerned with the relations between expressions, their meanings, and their users or contexts of use).

Let us consider a general symbolic expression, for example:

$$A\ B\ C\ B\ A. \qquad\qquad (1)$$

If we analyze this in *semantic* terms, we *interpret* it as meaning something or referring to something, e.g., numbers ("3 8 7 8 3"), words ("found sleepy on sleepy found"), tones ("b flat, a, d, a, b flat"), movements (three steps up a staircase and then down again), etc. If we analyze the same expression in *syntactic* terms, on the other hand, we disregard meanings and interpretations, and study only the configurations of the letter symbols. For example, we regard (1) as consisting of five units, forming part of:

$$M\ N\ A\ B\ C\ B\ A\ M\ N \qquad\qquad (2)$$

or of:

$$M\ N\ A\ B\ C\ B\ A\ N\ M \qquad\qquad (3)$$

or as mirror image of itself, etc.

The distinction between syntactic and semantic methods of analysis is basic to all systems that are formal or that use symbols in a systematic fashion; i.e., chiefly to mathematics and the mathematical sciences, but also to logic and linguistics. Linguistics is also concerned with the properties of the symbols themselves; and as these are primarily sounds, it needs *phonology* in addition to syntax and semantics. Whether linguistics also stands in need of another discipline that deals with *pragmatic* notions is open to question, as we have already seen; the status of pragmatics as a discipline is therefore not on a par with phonology, syntax and semantics.

If it is true that syntax and semantics are required for the analysis of ritual songs that have so far been primarily studied in anthropology and the science of religion, the general question naturally arises whether subdisciplines of logic and linguistics such as phonology, syntax, semantics and, perhaps, pragmatics have anything to offer these two sciences. For anthropology, the answer is clear: it has been repeatedly inspired by developments in linguistics, and these waves of inspiration have flowed along channels cut by at least some of these subdisciplines. Thus Lévi-Strauss has been inspired by the phonology of Jakobson, Singer by Peirce's semantics (a term I shall continue to use in a general sense, and

without making the distinction between semiotics and semiology) and Stanley Tambiah by the pragmatics of Austin and others (in his performative analysis of ritual: Tambiah 1979). Oddly enough, what alone appears to be missing in this list of examples is *syntax*— the most basic of these disciplines, at least according to most linguists, logicians and mathematicians.

Syntax is not really lacking in anthropology, but in order to discern it we must look more closely. In their famous article of 1899 entitled ''Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice,'' Hubert and Mauss offered a ''schème abstrait du sacrifice'' which is primarily syntactic in nature: for example, they made, for the first time, the elementary but fundamental syntactic observation that rites have a beginning, a middle and an end. Their analysis is to a large extent derived from the syntactic analysis of Vedic ritual found in the *śrauta sūtras*, a body of Sanskrit texts composed from approximately the eighth to the fifth century B.C. Mauss had been introduced to these texts by Sylvain Lévi who taught during 1896-1897 at the *Collège de France*, specifically for Mauss (Mauss 1969, III, 538) a course on Vedic ritual which was subsequently revised and published in 1898 as ''La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas.'' Hubert and Mauss also referred in their article to published sources based upon the Vedic *śrauta sūtras*, such as Schwab's 1886 monograph on the Vedic animal sacrifice entitled ''Das altindische Thieropfer.'' Durkheim (1915, 386) concluded from Hubert and Mauss, as well as from other anthropological data, that a rite can serve different ends; but he did not draw the further conclusion that ritual is therefore to some extent independent of the ends it is supposed to serve. Accordingly, he did not pay much attention to syntax, which is a pity for anthropology (cf. Staal 1984a, 3-8).

Why are we justified in characterizing the analysis of Vedic ritual given in the *śrauta sūtras* as *syntactic*? To provide an adequate answer to this question would necessitate a lengthy excursus into Vedic literature, but in the present context it should suffice to state that the *syntactic* analysis of ritual in the *śrauta sūtras* supplements and is to some extent supplemented by its *semantic* interpretation in the *Brāhmaṇas*. Just as the *Brāhmaṇas* stand at the source of much of Indian mythology, the syntactic analysis of the *śrauta sūtras* is closely

related to the origins of grammar, that uniquely Indian contribution that also incorporated the phonology and morphology of the Vedic *prātiśākhya* literature and that culminated in the Sanskrit grammar of Pāṇini. In the present context I must refer to what I have argued elsewhere, viz., that (1) the ancient Indians possessed a *science of ritual* which used primarily syntactic methods, and that (2) linguistics originated, at least in India, in close association with this syntactic analysis of ritual (Staal 1982).

European phonology has been profoundly inspired by the Indian grammarians, and Jakobson's concept of "distinctive features" still bears the stamp of their influence. The study of syntax, however, seems to have entered Western linguistics much later, with Zellig Harris and more definitively with Noam Chomsky. Thus, if we had to picture the influence exerted by linguistics (and by logic and philosophy via linguistics) on anthropology in tabular form, and in terms of the four subdisciplines to which we have referred, we should properly include these ancient Indian forerunners, as follows:

	Linguistics	*Anthropology*
phonology	Prātiśākhya, Pāṇini, Jakobson	Lévi-Strauss
syntax	Pāṇini, Chomsky	Śrauta-sūtras, Hubert & Mauss
semantics	Frege, Peirce, Saussure	Singer
pragmatics	Austin, Grice	Tambiah

In most of these relationships, the influence has been in the direction from linguistics (including logic and philosophy) to anthropology; the only exception is the ritual science of the *śrauta sūtras*, which I have listed in the table under "anthropology" for lack of a better heading and which influenced Pāṇini and the other Indian grammarians (Renou 1941-1942, Staal 1982).

What, then, is the relation between these various disciplines and the science of religion? Before we address this question we must make several observations. First of all, it is not really anthropology as a whole that has undergone the influence of syntax and pragmatics; it is rather the anthropological study of ritual. In the case of phonology, the case is different, and the consequences have been baffling: for Lévi-Strauss introduced into anthropology a form of analysis that stressed binary oppositions and that was based upon

distinctive features, though all linguists know that distinctive features had been postulated successfully only in phonology, and have no place in syntax or semantics. Lévi-Strauss, in other words, introduced into anthropology a linguistic method which he regarded as a universal panacea, while in fact it is a technique that has been found applicable only in a subdiscipline of linguistics. One might even go further and reason that it is *a priori* unlikely that a method that can be used in phonology but not in syntax or semantics could be useful in anthropology. Moreover, why should *two* suffice for man when so many other natural numbers exist and are found elsewhere in nature? If Lévi-Strauss had studied linguistics later, or Chomsky developed syntax earlier, Lévi-Strauss, instead of paying attention to binary opposition, might have introduced the syntactic methods that had been adumbrated by Hubert and Mauss in their study of ritual, but that were not fully developed in linguistics until Chomsky.

Since ritual is one of the main areas of research common to anthropology and the science of religion, one might expect that the latter science should have been inspired by linguistics or logic as well. In fact, the scene for such an influence had long been set. As early as 1867, Max Müller predicted: ''It was supposed at one time that a comparative analysis of the languages of mankind must transcend the powers of man: and yet, by the combined and well directed efforts of many scholars, great results have been obtained, and the principles that must guide the student of the Science of Language are now firmly established. It will be the same with the Science of Religion'' (in: Waardenburg 1973, I, 86). What happened, in fact, was that the comparative study of religions developed as Müller had predicted; but when the ''Science of Language'' made a methodological transition from comparative and diachronic philology to a synchronic science of linguistics, the ''Science of Religion'' lagged behind. Instead of developing a syntactic method of analysis appropriate to its object, it fell prey to phenomology, existentialism, hermeneutics and other warring factions. It was left to anthropologists such as Mauss to study religious phenomena like ritual in the manner in which de Saussure had studied language, as a ''système où tout se tient.'' Thus the science of religion failed to make the transition which would have turned

it, like linguistics, from a respectable branch of scholarship into a contemporary scientific discipline as well.

Belatedly, scholars of religion have expressed an awareness of the need for such a transition. For example, in a recent reaction to my article "The Meaninglessness of Ritual" (Staal 1979b), Hans H. Penner states that "the study of linguistics is the necessary foundation for explanations in religion" and that "language as we all know is composed of signs, and all linguistic signs have phonological, syntactic and semantic components" (Penner 1985). Yet, in the same article, Penner asserts that my syntactic analysis of ritual is "irrelevant." He supports this by emphasizing that, by my own admission, these pieces of analysis "do not correspond to any existing ritual" or "to any actual ritual."

Disentangling some of the misconceptions that are at the root of these assertions should help us to understand more precisely the relationships between the methodology of science and the science of ritual—or *any* empirical science, for that matter. It would be correct to say that anthropology has been influenced by linguistics; but this does not mean that specific pieces of linguistic analysis have been of great use to anthropology. For example, some of Lévi-Strauss' work serves to warn us that an uncritical acceptance of distinctive features is articifial and unproductive within anthropology. In my study of Vedic ritual I found something different, viz., that some ritual structures can be generated by rules that are similar to the rules that linguists call transformations, while others are unlike any structures found in natural languages or with which linguists are familiar (Staal 1979a, and b, 1984b). From the methodological standpoint, however, the most basic issue is not whether ritual or anthropological structures are similar to linguistic structures. Of importance is that all such structures are *postulated* and never correspond exactly to actual facts such as rites. Rather, they correspond, if they are adequate, to features that are *abstracted* from actually existing rites, just as the laws of physics do not correspond to specific events that take place in my garden, but to features *abstracted* from such events.

Lévi-Strauss may have been wrong with regard to the specific binary oppositions, or other specific phonological or syntactic structures, that he postulated; but he is right with respect to method.

What is basic to his method, and to all scientific method, is that
structures are postulated entities that are not empirically given—
that are, in fact, invisible—but that enable us, provided they are
adequate, to account for what is empirically given and visible.
Lévi-Strauss has in fact told us where he came upon this idea,
which was novel and startling to him, a French philosopher by
training, and which remained the main insight that separated him
from existentialists such as Sartre (see Sartre 1960 and Lévi-Strauss
1962, Chapter 9): he took from geology, from Marx and from
Freud the idea that is basic to all science, viz., that reality is dif-
ferent from what it appears to be (Lévi-Strauss 1968, 61-62). This
is obvious to scientists, as indeed it is to most ordinary people; the
only persons who have failed to understand it are certain types of
philosophers *bien étonnés de se trouver ensemble*, such as behaviorists,
phenomenologists, practitioners of hermeneutics and ordinary
language philosophers such as Wittgenstein (cf. Staal 1975,
Chapter 4). What anthropology has taken from linguistics is there-
fore, in the final analysis, nothing peculiarly linguistic but rather
an insight into the characteristic features of science.

These general considerations at the same time help to explain the
importance of logic and mathematics. These latter disciplines study
structures in general, including the most general structures that can
be imagined. The abstract, underlying structures that are
postulated in order to account for empirical facts and events are
necessarily mathematical or logical in character. This is the com-
mon insight and methodology shared by anthropologists such as
Singer, Tambiah and Lévi-Strauss (whatever their differences), but
that empiricists such as Edmund Leach, and most scholars of
religion, fail to appreciate and understand.

We are now in a position to see that the influence of linguistics
on anthropology and on the science of religion does not necessarily
imply that the objects of the latter two sciences are *languages* or even
"systems of meanings and symbols." What I have attempted to
demonstrate in my earlier studies of ritual is not that ritual is a
language, but that it is, like language, a *rule-governed activity*. Since
it is an activity that is governed by rules, it becomes important to
discover what actual rules, and what kind of rules, in fact govern
it. In pursuing such questions, I discovered that ritual structures

can be analysed in syntactic terms not by methods specific to linguistics, but by mathematical and logical methods that have also influenced linguistics (e.g., Staal 1979a, 1983a, especially II, 127-134, 1986a). I cannot say whether other traditional object areas of anthropological or religious study are also rule-governed systems; but mythology, for example, does not appear to be such a system, at least insofar as Vedic mythology is concerned. Vedic ritual and Vedic mythology are in fact remarkably separate developments, that rarely correspond with each other and that are accordingly distinguished from each other by the relevant experts (e.g., Tsuji 1952, 187; Renou 1953, 16, 29; Dandekar 1982, 77).

It may be helpful at this point to clear up one more confusion that is also met with in Penner's article. Penner claims that I failed to take into account the Fregean distinction between *sense* and *reference*, and also failed to appreciate that "and," "the" and "of" in a natural language such as English do not *refer*. I agree that "it would be odd to assert that they are meaningless because they do not refer." But what I did is different. In that 1979 article, and in subsequent studies, I tried to show that a syntactic analysis of ritual is not only possible but also fruitful; and that such an analysis demonstrates that the assumption that rituals express meanings like language is not only unnecessary, but inaccurate and misleading. It is not clear that there is *anything* in the realm of ritual that functions like names, nouns, verbs, or syncategorematic terms such as "and", "the," or "of." This has very little to do, incidentally, with the distinction between "analytic" and "synthetic" to which Penner tried to relate it (contrast Staal 1966). Our conclusion should be rather different: to study ritual adequately we need a science of ritual akin to the Indian science of the *śrauta sūtras*. In developing such a science, methodology may prove helpful, but neither linguistics, nor anthropology, nor the science of religion have performed such a task or are presently equipped to do it. Whether they will in turn benefit from such a science of ritual remains an open question, to which I shall return in the Conclusion.

As for the distinction between sense and reference, Vedic ritual offers examples that are as clear as Frege's own. The name "Agniṣṭoma", for example, refers to the same ritual as does the name "Jyotiṣṭoma." But although the reference is the same, the

senses are different: *agniṣṭoma* means "Praise of Agni" and *jyotiṣṭoma* means "Praise of Light." Both refer to the same ceremony, a Soma celebration with *one* pressing day during which there are twelve chants and recitations: five during the morning pressing, five during the afternoon pressing, and two during the third pressing. We shall return in the next section to the eleventh chant, or first chant of the third pressing. In the present context it is sufficient to state that Agniṣṭoma and Jyotiṣṭoma, like "morning star" and "evening star," have different senses but the same reference.[2]

II

Most delicious and inebriating

In order to test some of the ideas discussed in the previous section, we shall now turn to the study of a ritual song. Or rather, we shall be concerned with a family of ritual songs derived from a verse of the Rigveda which extols the flow of Soma. These ritual songs belong to the category of ritual sound that in India, since Vedic times, has been called *mantra*. A mantra is a ritual sound expression that may or may not be derived from an expression of language—like the verse of the Rigveda in the cases we shall be studying. Whether the mantras themselves should be regarded as expressions of language is a topic that has never been discussed, because it is always assumed that they are. Mantras and the ritual acts themselves correspond to each other. To study a ritual system is to study a system of mantras, and vice versa.

The verse that is our point of departure is the first of the ninth book, the only book of the Rigveda that deals in its entirety with Soma and its ritual purification and preparation. It is the first verse of a hymn (RV 9.1) that belongs to a group of hymns all written in the same meter, called *gāyatrī*. The text of this *gāyatrī*-verse is:

<div align="center">

svádiṣṭhayā mádiṣṭhayā
pávasva soma dhárayā   (4)
índrāya pátave sutáḥ (RV 9.1.1).

</div>

The translation is straightforward and uncontroversial:

"With most delicious and inebriating flow,
Soma, purify yourself,
Pressed for Indra to drink."

The *gāyatrī* meter consists of three octosyllabic verses, in which long
(–) and short (∪) syllables are generally distributed as follows:

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
- \cup - - & \cup - \cup \cup \\
- - \cup - & \cup - \cup \cup \\
- - - - & \cup - \cup \cup
\end{array}
\tag{5}
$$

In the case of the above verse, the distribution of longs and shorts
is as follows:

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\cup - \cup - & \cup - \cup - \\
\cup - \cup - & \cup - \cup - \\
- - \cup - & \cup \cup \cup -
\end{array}
\tag{6}
$$

The accent "´" which has been printed over certain syllables of the
text in (4) is called *udātta*, "raised," and it is possible that it was
originally spoken with raised pitch (but see Gray 1959a and b for
a dissenting view). Whatever its original pronunciation, it was later
marked by reciting the previous syllable at a lower pitch, and the
following at a higher pitch. A few more rules have to be taken into
account before we can properly pronounce this verse, but we shall
not trouble ourselves with them. The lower accent is called *anudātta*,
"not raised," and is written in the manuscripts (that are all of later
date) with a horizontal bar below the syllable; and the higher,
svarita, "(re)sounding," written with a vertical bar above it. The
result is as follows:

$$
\begin{array}{l}
\text{svadiṣṭhayā madiṣṭhayā} \\
\text{pavasva soma dhārayā} \\
\text{indrāya pātave sutaḥ}
\end{array}
\tag{7}
$$

This mode of recitation, which is called *svādhyāya*, only serves the
purpose of transmission, from teacher to pupil or from father to
son. Texts are never recited in this manner in the ritual itself: to
be fit for ritual use, the traditional recitations have to undergo cer-
tain modifications. In many cases, verse have to be turned into
songs which are then incorporated in the Veda of Songs, or

Sāmaveda. In the above case, the first step of that process of incorporation is extremely simple. The *udātta*, *svarita* and *anudātta* are chanted at three different pitches, each at an interval of about a second from each other, the first (*udātta*) the highest, the last (*anudātta*) the lowest, and the *svarita* at an intermediate pitch. The manuscripts refer to these tones with the help of numerals:

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{``1'' for } udātta & \\
\text{``2'' for } svarita & \qquad (8) \\
\text{``3'' for } anudātta. &
\end{array}
$$

These numerals are written above the syllables, as follows:

$$
\overset{1\ 2}{\text{svādiṣṭhayā}}\ \overset{3\ \ 1\ 2\ \ \ \ \ 3}{\text{madiṣṭhayā}}
$$
$$
\overset{1\ 2}{\text{pavasva}}\ \overset{3\ \ \ 1\ 2}{\text{soma dhārayā}} \qquad (9)
$$
$$
\overset{1\ \ \ \ 2\ 3\ \ 1\ 2\ \ \ \ 3\ 2}{\text{indrāya pātave sutaḥ}}
$$

(9) is closer to (4) than it is to (7), which shows that the Sāmaveda is earlier and closer to the original Rigveda than the Rigveda system of horizontal and vertical strokes used in the manuscripts. This is in accordance with the chronology proposed by Kiparsky (1982, Lecture II) for the development of the Vedic accent system, provided we insert the Sāmaveda *after* the Rigveda as it was known to Pāṇini, but *before* the Rigveda recension with which we are familiar.

Before we can sing (9), we have to know at which pitch the syllables not marked with a numeral have to be sung. The rule is again very simple: these are sung at the pitch of the preceding syllable. The basic chants of the Sāmaveda, thus provided with a pattern of song that immediately derives from the accentuation of the original, are listed in the first part of the Sāmaveda, which is referred to as Saṃhitā—as in the case of the other Vedas—and also, more appropriately, as *arcikā*, "list of verses," from *ṛk* "verse" from which the appellation *ṛgveda*, "Veda of Verse," is also derived.

The next portion of the Sāmaveda lists the melodies to which these verses are sung. It consists of the more common *grāmageyagāna*, "songs to be sung in the village," and the more esoteric *araṇyageyagāna* (or *araṇyegeyagāna*), "songs to be sung in the

forest.'' Both these *gāna*-books correspond to the *svādhyāya* of the other Vedas: they mainly serve the purpose of transmitting the tradition to the following generations; they are sometimes ritually used in their *gāna* form, but more often this form undergoes further modification for the sake of "ritual application" (*prayoga*). This application is the actual purpose of these songs and of the Sāmaveda itself.

There are numerous melodies in these *gāna* collections because one verse is generally sung to different melodies. But we also meet with the opposite: different verses are sung to the same melody. In that case, the melody needs to be listed only once; and this has led to some confusion among students of the Sāmaveda.

The Vedic tradition is celebrated for the care with which it has been handed down; despite the vicissitudes of Indian history during the last three thousand years, there are in the Rigveda no variant forms or "readings" (a term based upon the Western assumption that these compositions are "texts" which are "read"). This applies to the place of the accents as well: it never varies. In the case of the transmission of melodies, greater variation is expected; and this may well account for the belief that there were originally a thousand schools in the Sāmaveda (Renou 1947, 88) as against two in the case of the Rigveda and Yajurveda each. When one hears contemporary traditions of the Sāmaveda, the musical renderings vary greatly. Yet, two traditions can be clearly distinguished: the Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya, which is still found in many parts of India (chiefly Tamilnad, Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra); and the Jaiminīya which is confined to Kerala and a few villages in Tamilnad.

The Jaiminīya is almost extinct; its manuscripts are rare and have, with a few exceptions, remained unpublished. The Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya tradition of two closely connected schools, which I shall refer to as K-R, is still relatively strong, and its texts have been published in their entirety. In these latter texts, a simple notation for the pitch of the tones of the songs has been adopted in the manuscripts, most of which are of recent date (i.e., no more than a few centuries old). The printed texts have adopted this notation in which the notes are referred to with the help of the numerals 1,...,7 which designate pitches in their descending order, again

with intervals of roughly a second. There are seven notes in the
Sāmaveda according to these manuscript notations, which is consis-
tent with some of the traditional accounts (e.g., that of the
Nāradaśikṣā).

   In the *grāmageyagāna* of the K-R school, our verse is listed as item
468, and it is provided with nine melodies to which it is sung. The
first of these, referred to as "GG 468.1", is the following:

svādaiṣṭhāyā / madāiṣṭhāyā // pavasvaso / mādhā'1 rā'23 yā //
indrāyāpā // tavāisū'23 tā'343ḥ / o'2345 i // ḍā //   (10)

   In order to know how this actually sounds, a few more conven-
tions must be explained: "r" denotes lengthening; the numerals in
the line sound the same as those written above the syllables, each
lasting one beat or time unit (*mātrā*); they also induce lengthening
of the preceding syllable. The song consists of *five* portions that are
separated by double bars ("//"), further subdivided into smaller
portions separated by single bars ("/"). The number of these latter,
smaller subdivisions varies, but the former subdivision into five is
constant in an important class of rituals: these five portions, called
bhakti, are of fundamental importance in the Soma rituals, where
they are chanted by different priests facing different directions, sit-
ting in a particular fashion and following a pattern that is always
the same (see AGNI I, 608-609). The five portions, which should
each be sung with a single breath, are called: (1) *prastāva*
("prelude"), (2) *udgītha* ("chant"), (3) *pratihāra* ("response"), (4)
upadrava ("accessory") and (5) *nidhana* ("finale"). Three of the four
Sāmaveda priests participate in such a chant, viz., Prastotā,
Udgātā, and Pratihartā. The assignment of *bhakti* portions to them
is as follows:

   1) *prastāva* by Prastotā;
   2) *udgītha* by Udgātā;
   3) *pratihāra* by Pratihartā;
   4) *upadrava* by Udgātā; and
   5) *nidhana* by all three.

When we compare (10) with the original verse (4), we observe
that certain syllables have been expanded, or otherwise modified.
For example, many of the short *a*'s are lengthened into long *ā*'s,
and *i* and *e* have become *āi*. The latter modification is well known

to linguists: it is the famous *vṛddhi* (''lengthening'') discovered by the Sanskrit grammarians that is referred to in the first sūtra of Pāṇini's grammar. At the same time, the notion of *vṛddhi* is one of the cornerstones of Indo-European comparative phonology, as well as the basis of our notion of ''sound law.'' This illustrates in passing that the derivation of the ritual chants of the Sāmaveda from the Rigveda (and not only the formation of the Padapāṭha from the Rigveda, as V.N. Jha has shown) has contributed to the origin of the Sanskrit grammatical tradition.

These phonetic or sound modifications are often determined, or partly determined, by the formal nature of the syllables of the original, in particular by their length; the structure of the song is therefore related to the original meter which is also based upon the distinction between short and long syllables. These relationships are dealt with in texts such as the (K-R) Puṣpasūtra, which makes use of grammatical technical terms such as *vṛddhi* and a great many others. Song (10) is also called a *gāyatrī* song—a circumstance to which we shall return.

We finally observe that in (10) new syllables have been added, in particular the termination of the *upadrava* and all of the *nidhana*:

$$\overset{1}{o}\text{'}2345 \text{ i } // \text{ ḍā } //$$

Such syllables are called *stobha*. They are meaningless and are often similar to the later mantras and dhāraṇīs of Tantrism (whether ''Hindu'' or ''Buddhist''). It stands to reason that these syllables were originally added in order to complete or fill the gaps in a preexisting melody, but this assumption can only be tested by studying a larger number of melodies in association with the textual sources to which they are set.

In order to study the ritual significance of our song we need to be familiar with the structure of the entire system of its derivatives in the corpus of the Sāmaveda. Instead of pursuing this by numerical references to the published texts of the K-R Sāmaveda, which would be intelligible only the specialists, it will be more interesting and worthwhile to publish songs from the corpus of the Jaiminīya. Since these songs have never before been published, I have made use of recordings and of a copy of a manuscript in the Malayalam script prepared by my collaborator Itti Ravi Nam-

budiri. The original manuscript is in the possession of Asko Parpola
(University of Helsinki). Two other manuscripts of the Jaiminīya
songs are known: they are B 497 and B 61-62 of the India Office
Library, both discovered by A. C. Burnell in the 1870's in the
Tamil region and both written in the Grantha script. I have men-
tioned the most important variant "readings" (referred to as "C")
that occur in a handwritten copy completed by Willem Caland in
1906, which was based upon B 497 and collated with B 61 and B
62. (For the Araṇyageyagāna, Caland did not note the stobhas or
the musical syllable notation given in B 62). A photograph of
Caland's manuscript was in the possession of Dr. A. A. Bake at the
School of Oriental and African Studies, and was given to me by
Mrs. Bake. The original is in the University Library of Utrecht. As
the reader will see, some of the variants help to establish the bound-
aries between the *bhakti* portions. There are still instances where
these remain unclear in the manuscript tradition, and therefore
must be determined from oral tradition. This is easy to do because
of the rule that one *bhakti* has to be chanted with one breath. If the
number of *bhakti* portions is different from five, the method of chan-
ting has to be further specified.

Here follow the nine songs based upon the gāyatrī verse from the
Grāmageyagāna:

Jaiminīya Grāmageyagāna 49.2.1-9

(1) svādāyiṣṭhāyā madāyiṣṭhāyā / pavasva somādhārāyā / in-
drāyāpā / tavāyi sūtāḥ / oyilā //
(2) svādisthaya iyā iyā madisthāyā / pāvasva so iyā iyā madhārāyā
/ indrāyapā iyā iyā / tavāyi sūtāḥ / oyilā //
(3) svādisthayau ho vā iyā madisthāyā / pavasva sau ho vā iyā
madhārāyā / indrāya pau ho vā iyā / tavāyi sūtāḥ / oyilā //
C: poho
(4) oyi svādi / sthayā mādīsthāyā vuvovā / pavasva somā dhārāyā
o indrā / yā pā au ho vā / tave sūtāḥ //
(5) uhuvāyi svādī / sthayā mādīsthāyā au ho vā / pavasva soma
dhārāyā uhuva indrāyāpā / tāvā au ho vā / sūtāḥ //
(6) svādāyiṣṭhayā madisthāyā pāvāsvā somadhāraya āyindrāyā pā
hā bu / tavā yi sutā bu / vā //

C: madiṣṭhayā / somadhārayā /

(7) svādiṣṭhayā madiṣṭhayā pavasva somadhārayā indrāyapā / tavā
ū tavā ū tavā vu vā au ho vā / sūtāḥ //

C: somadhārayā /

(8) au ho hṃ bhā e hiyā hā hāyi svādāyiṣṭhayā mādī o yi mādī /
au ho hṃ bhā e hiyā hā hāyi ṣthayā pavāsvā so o svā so / au ho hṃ
bhā e hiyā hā hāyi ma dhāraya indrā o indrā / au ho hṃ bhā e hiyā
hā hāyi ya pā tavāyi sūtā oyi sūtaḥ / au ho hṃ bhā e hiyā hā hā
au ho vā / ī //

(9) svādiṣṭhayā madāyiṣṭhayā / pavāsvā soma dhārāyā / ā yindrāyā
pātavā hā vu vā / sūtaḥ //

A few observations may be made. First of all, the Jaiminīya does
not use a numerical notation to refer to the pitch of the tonal pat-
tern which characterizes the melodies. There exists a Jaiminīya
musical notation by means of syllables from the Grantha script, of
which we noted that Caland copied it from B 497 but not from B
61-62. It is not marked in the Malayalam manuscript.

Secondly we can observe that the similarities between the
Jaiminīya and the K-R version (above (10)) are phonetic: K-R
often has ''āi'' where the Malayalam manuscript of the Jaiminīya
version has ''āyi'', although Caland's manuscript also has ''āi.''
This is not due to differences between the Malayalam and Grantha
scripts, because both of these can express ''āi'' as well as ''āyi.''
Thus minor phonetic differences may be determined not by dif-
ferences of affiliation but by geography (Tamilnad versus Kerala).
Important differences, however, are due to the Vedic school. For
example, the K-R has often ''o'' where the Jaiminīya has ''ā''; and
the well known K-R stobha ''o iḍā'' appears in the Jaiminīya tradi-
tion always as ''o iḻā,'' using the Dravidian sound ''ḻ'', pronounced
like *r* in American English, but further back (see Renou 1947, 99;
Staal 1961, 69). The occurrence of this sound may indicate that the
Jaiminīya tradition originated in South India, or that it originated
in an area of the North at a time when a Dravidian language was
still spoken there.

The third observation was made in AGNI, from which I quote
(I, 278): ''When dealing with these songs and chants it should be
remembered that the Sāmaveda is replete with what, from a textual

point of view, are unexpected variations and varieties. These features are characteristic of the Sāmaveda, Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya as well as Jaiminīya. Whenever regular patterns seem to emerge, there are new deviations that break the pattern. To treat the text as if it were corrupt would be to miss its very raison d'être. But even if we accept its playful deviations, we find that the rules of this game often escape us. Many forms that may seem to be printing mistakes or mistakes of the manuscripts are therefore in fact what they should be.''

The seventh of this sequence of nine songs is used in its Grāmageyagāna form in the Agnicayana ritual. After the bird altar has been fully consecrated, when it is regarded as ferocious (*krūra*) and dreadful (*ghora*), it has to be brought under control and pacified. To this end the Adhvaryu, the chief priest of the Ya-jurveda, assisted by the Pratiprasthātā, pours a continuous libation of goat milk over the western brick of the northern wing. This brick is chosen because it is relatively soft and tender, far away from the center of the altar which is center of power, and also because it can be easily approached from different sides (AGNI I, 509 ff.). During this oblation, the Adhvaryu recites the famous *Śatarudrīya* or *Rudram* (Taittirīya Saṃhitā 4.5), which derives its popularity partly from the fact that it was subsequently interpreted within the perspective of Śaiva theism (Gonda 1980; Arnold, forthcoming). During this oblation and recitation, the Udgātā sings a sequence of 57 sāmans, together called Flow of Milk (*kṣīradhārā*). The fourth of these is our GG 49.2.7.

Why was this song chosen to perform this function? It fits with the others only to some extent: it shares with most a triple repetition (of ''tavā ū''), and with many the stobha ''au ho vā.'' Both these features, however, are quite common in the Sāmaveda. The more complex features that distinguish a series of later songs in the Flow of Milk sequence (cf. Staal 1983b) are not found in it. One is tempt-ed to believe that there is no answer to the question of why this par-ticular song was selected for use at this particular point of the ritual. It came from the collection like a seed that falls from a blossom and is carried through the wind until it settles down somewhere.

What about the stobha ''tavā ū'' itself? Again, we observe a phonological, and therefore linguistic correspondence—or is it

pseudo-linguistic? "Tavā ū" comes from "-tave," which should yield, in linguistic terms, "tavāi" or "tavāyi," as indeed it does in many other songs of the sequence GG 49.2. What we find, therefore, is a variation of a linguistic relationship. This is quite common in these songs, and it supports the idea that the derivation of songs from verses is closely connected with the origination of linguistics in India.

In Sanskrit, "tava" also has a meaning: it means "yours." The stobha can be taken to mean "yours U," which is almost as good as "yours truly." But this meaning correspondence is undoubtedly adventitious and without significance, which does not imply, however, that it could not evoke semantic associations among some users. "Tava," moreover, occurs in other stobhas (see Puṣpasūtra, ed. Simon, 1909, 770 s.v. *tava tyad*), and "ū" is quite famous in later Tantrism (see, for example, Padoux 1963, 203-206). Historical connexions between Vedic stobhas and Tantric bīja-mantras are likely to exist (see Staal 1985a): a good example is the famous Tantric *phaṭ* which occurred already in the Sāmaveda (see van der Hoogt 1929, 99; cf. *phāṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ*: AGNI I, 416).

Next we shall consider some of the more esoteric "songs to be sung in the forest." Jaiminīya Araṇyageyagāna 15.7 (corresponding to K-R AG 16.1) includes the following song based upon our verse:

ayāmāyām ayāmāyām ayāmāyāṃ svādiṣṭhayā madāyiṣṭhayā /
pavasva somadhāraya / indrāyapā tavāyi sūtaḥ / ayāmāyām
ayāmāyām ayāmāyā au ho vā / ī //
C: ayāmāyāmayāmāyā (2x), ayāmāyāmayāmāyā
mayāmāyāmauhovā

Again, there is triple repetition, and "ayam" also happens to *mean* something, viz., "this one," without carrying any deeper significance. It is a well known Vedic stobha (see van der Hoogt 1929, 11: *ayaṃ yaḥ*, 91: *ayam ayāyam*, 99: *ayaṃ vāyau*, 111: *ayam*) and is perhaps related to the equally well-known Tantric stobha "aiṃ" (see, for example, Bharati 1970, 119).

This song is ritually used in the construction of the Agnicayana altar. When the bricks of the first layer are laid down (which is

called *cīyate*, from the root *ci* from which *cayana*, *citi*, *caitya*, etc. derive) the Udgātā chants occasionally, apparently only when it is the turn of a ritually significant brick to be deposited and consecrated. At the consecration of the seventh brick, which is called Dūrvā after the grass of that name, the Adhvaryu recites Taittirīya Saṃhitā 4.2.9.2 c-d (see AGNI I, 423):

"Rising up from every stem, from every joint, dūrvā, extend to us a thousandfold, a hundredfold.
You who extend with a hundred, arise with a thousand!
To you, goddess brick, may we offer with oblation."
At the beginning of this recitation the Adhvaryu looks at the Udgātā, to alert him, and the Udgātā intones his song, AG 15.7. Why this song is chanted here at this time is not known. There is no specific phonetic, phonological, syntactic, semantic or pragmatic similarity between recitation and chant, apart from the fact that the recitation is again in the gāyatrī meter and the chant is a gāyatrī chant—both varieties that are exceedingly common.

No specific semantic connexion appears to exist between the ritual applications of these two derivatives from our Rigvedic verse that occur in the two basic *gāna* books of the Sāmaveda. Other ritual uses of chants that are derived from these songs pertain to the Soma ritual and are listed in the Ūha and Ūhya (or Rahasya) Gāna collections of the Sāmaveda. In these two collections, the songs are ordered in the same sequence in which they are used in the Soma rituals, and they are given in the actual forms in which they are sung.

The ritual context of the Soma ceremonies has already been briefly mentioned in the first section. In the Agniṣṭoma, there are three pressings of Soma; at the third pressing, there are two sequences of chants and recitations; the first of these, which is the eleventh sequence of the entire pressing day, consists of a series of seventeen songs, of which the first and the fourth are based upon our verse. These songs are listed in Ūhagāna 3.2-6 (see AGNI I, 646-648), but there are several difficulties, notably one remarked upon by Caland (Caland-Henry 1907, 180): the first three songs are *not* listed there (though their textual form, without melody, occurs in the corresponding passages of the Saṃhitā). So how should they be sung?

The answer is that these are to be sung in the Gāyatra melody, which is explained somewhere else, once and for all, but not in the corpus of the Sāmaveda. The same holds for other verses in the *gāyatrī* meter, in particular the famous Gāyatrī verse of the Rigveda (3.62.10) that is not listed in the Sāmaveda either. There is some special reason for this separate treatment, which has never been explained, and for which a solution can only be found if we return once more to our point of departure.

One of the most famous Vedic mantras is generally referred to after the common meter in which it is composed: the *Gāyatrī*. This mantra is recited daily during the Sandhyā ceremony, and is taught to every brahmin boy at the time of his Upanayana, an initiation ceremony or "second birth," during which he receives his sacred thread.

The text of the Gāyatrī (Rigveda 3.62.10) is:

> tát savitúr váreṇyam
> bhárgo devásya dhīmahi   (11)
> dhíyo yó naḥ pracodáyāt.

The distribution of long and short syllables in this verse is as follows:

$$
\begin{array}{cccc|cccc}
- & \cup & \cup & - & \cup & - & \cup & - \\
- & - & - & - & \cup & - & \cup & \cup \\
\cup & - & - & - & \cup & - & \cup & -
\end{array}
$$

The translation is straightforward:

> "May we receive this desirable
> light of the god Savitṛ,
> who shall impel our thoughts."

This mantra is also called Sāvitrī after the god Savitṛ. It is often quoted in Vedic literature, sometimes in the context of a wish for inspiration (see, for example, Gonda 1980a, 45, 104); and is recited during many rites and on many occasions (see Gonda 1980b, s.v. "Sāvitrī"). According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (2.3.4.39), all wishes of the sacrificer will be fulfilled by this mantra because they are impelled by Savitṛ, who is the "impeller" (*prasavitṛ*) of the gods. This is a typical comment of that Brāhmaṇa—vacuous and ad hoc.

Why was this mantra picked to play such an important and
auspicious role? There are hundreds of mantras in the Rigveda that
say something similar. The answer to such questions is always the
same: there is no answer. It fell from the heap like the windblown
seed we have already encountered. For some arbitrary reason,
supreme significance is attached to it. It occurs everywhere, with
one exception: it does not occur in the Sāmaveda. Or rather, it is
placed at the beginning in some collections (in some manuscripts
and in most of the printed editions), remaining outside the
systematically numbered sequences and all classifications, while in
other collections it is simply not found.

The reason for this special treatment, once the mantra had ac-
quired its special function, is not difficult to find: this mantra had
too much meaning. A prayer for inspiration that is daily recited,
that defines a brahmin and distinguishes him from others, is not the
kind of mantra that provides the auspicious but meaningless sounds
that make up the melodies that accompany ritual activity. The
Sāvitrī, in fact, is so important to a brahmin that it has spilled over
to other twice-born castes, albeit in a different form: Kṣatriyas have
a Sāvitrī in the *triṣṭubh* meter, and Vaiśyas have one in the *jagatī*
meter (see Malamoud 1977, 89). The Gāyatrī thus has meaning as
well as social significance—unlike most mantras and other ritual
chants—although this significance is partly theoretical, like much
that concerns the *varṇa* system. And so it remains significant and
isolated.

The Gāyatrī melody occupies a similar position in the
ceremonies of the Soma ritual. Many of the *stuti* or *stotra* chants,
whose sequences define a Soma ritual, are set to this melody. They
all receive the same treatment, a treatment which in fact obliterates
almost all the meaningful characteristics of the originals, replacing
them by stobhas and other meaningless sounds, particularly long
ō's. Since only the *prastāva* retains the original text, it is only that
portion that is explicitly noted in the tradition. The other *bhakti* por-
tions are always sung in the same manner. The *udgītha* is always:

<div align="center">ō vā ō vā ō vā hṃ bhā ō vā,</div>

with very long *ō*'s (note that South Indian scripts, unlike Nāgarī,
distinguish between short *o* and long *ō*). The remaining *bhakti* por-
tions are collectively treated as follows. The Pratihartā always sings

"hṃ" together with the Udgātā, breathes in, and chants "vāk" (which comes from nowhere) while he holds his breath—therefore almost inaudibly. The Yajamāna and some other priests, in accordance with complex rules, should also chant "ō" (see AGNI I, 603).

We are now in a position to return to the ritual uses in the Soma ceremonies of our verse, Rigveda 9.1.1. We can now understand why, for the first song of the third pressing sequence of chants, only the *prastāva* need to be known. It is listed in the Saṃhitā as follows:

svādiṣṭhayā madiṣṭhayōm (Jaiminīya Arcikā 64.1).

The fourth chant is listed in Ūha Gāna 3.2. It preserves more of the original text although the *udgītha* has also disappeared:

svādiṣṭhayā ma dā yiṣṭhayā / ō svā sō ō / ā yindrā / ō pā tavā hāvu vā / sū taḥ // (see AGNI I, 646).

In all the cases of ritual application of mantras we have so far studied, nothing remains of the rich literature of the Vedas but a collection of sounds and syllables. Entire passages that originally were pregnant with meaning are reduced to long *ō*'s. This is precisely what distinguishes *mantras* from the original verse: to be made into a mantra, and thus fit for ritual consumption, a verse has to be subjected to *formal* transformations, operations that apply to form but not to meaning. This is why Renou referred to mantras as "poussière védique," and why he mentioned "le découpage des vieux hymnes en formules ou même fragments devenus des corps inertes dans la trame liturgique" (1960, 76-77 quoted by Malamoud 1983, 33).

Ritual traditions have obvious social significance in that they identify groups and distinguish them from each other. They give people, in that hackneyed contemporary phrase, "a sense of identity." That identity, however, is often due to distinctions that rest upon meaningless phonetic variations. Thus the Jaiminīya and Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya schools differ from each other by such characteristics as vowel length, or because the former uses "ā" where the latter uses "o." Up to the present time, the Vedic schools themselves are distinguished from each other by such variations of sound that can be more easily explained in grammatical than in religious terms. The Gāyatrī mantra itself is pronounced differently by Nambudiri brahmans belonging to the Yajurveda or Sāmaveda and Nambudiris belonging to the Rigveda: the former pronounce

the *visarga* ''ḥ'' at the end of ''naḥ'' in (11) as an ''f,'' a sound that is generally believed not to occur in Sanskrit.

Actually, the bilabial spirant ''f'' is an optional variant prescribed by a grammatical rule which also introduces another sound, the velar ''kh'', which is believed to be absent from Sanskrit. Special symbols are needed to ad these sounds to the alphabet, as in the manuscripts or printed editions of Pāṇini's rule 8.3.37:

kupvoḥ �‿k ᴇ᾽pau ca, '' �‿ and ᴇ᾽ may be substituted in the place of the visarga when a voiceless velar or a voiceless labial, respectively, follow.''

In this symbolism, ''˿k'' refers to the velar ''kh'', and ''ᴇ᾽ p'' to the bilabial spirant ''f''. The interpretation of this rule depends on conventions that have been established elsewhere in the grammar. Thus we have to supply *padasya*, ''in the place of a word,'' from 8.1.16; *saṃhitāyām*, ''in continuous pronunciation,'' from 8.2.108; and *vā*, ''optionally,'' from 8.3.36. That the rules are to be understood in this order follows from 8.2.1, and that the optional *vā* means ''preferable'' has been shown by Kiparsky (1979). That the Yajurveda and Sāmaveda have adopted the preferred form is in accordance with the central place they occupy in the ritual tradition.

In the Gāyatrī, the voiceless labial which follows the visarga ''ḥ'' is the initial ''p'' of ''pracodayāt.'' Thus the variation between Vedic schools and between the Vedas themselves is reduced to the optionality of grammatical rules. This is not a modern phenomenon; it goes back to the origin of the tradition. The bilabial spirant ''f'' occurs not only in the grammar of Pāṇini, but in two phonetic treatises (Prātiśākhya) of the Yajurveda, namely, the Taittirīya of the Black and the Vājasaneyi of the White Yajurveda. (It is lacking again in the Mādhyandina, another school of the White Yajurveda: Renou 1942-1957, 396).

Throughout this section we have observed that considerations of form and formal derivations and transformations are foremost in the minds of the ritualists. In some cases these forms appear to be purely arbitrary, since they do not correspond to any type of formal relationship that is known or seems to make sense. In other cases the rules of grammar, especially those that introduce options, are used and lead to further ritual developments and proliferation. In

both cases the chief concern of the ritualists is with rules. They are constantly concentrating upon rules, and forms that are generated by rules. All their preoccupations illustrate the nature of ritual as a rule-governed activity.

III

Nonsemantic approaches

In the previous section we saw how a verse of the Rigveda was turned into mantras for various rites by being stretched here, compressed there, interlarded with vowels and syllables, and finally chopped up to such an extent that its original form was no longer recognizable. Yet all these transformations conform to precise rules, and the original form can not only be recovered, but is present to the mind of the ritual performers. The same cannot be said of the meaning. For in the course of these same processes, the original verse is not only rendered well-nigh unintelligible, but much of its meaning has disappeared and is no longer recoverable. This should alert us to the possibility that meaning does not occupy center stage in the analysis of the ritual. Further analysis confirms this. For the original meaning of the verse is unknown to the chanters, and neither is it specifically related to any of the rites with which it has been associated, nor do these rites share any common meaning or function. The semantic approach to the synchronic study of ritual therefore appears fruitless, at least in the case of our Vedic data.

Three important questions remain. The first concerns the extent to which the nonsemantic approaches discussed in the first section, viz., the pragmatic, the phonetic or phonological, and the syntactic, are helpful in elucidating these Vedic data. This is the topic of the present section. The second question relates to whether Vedic ritual is representative of a class of rituals, or is unique. The third question, related to the second, is whether the semantic approach has established anything at all—for if it hasn't, most existing scholarly writing on ritual will have been in vain. I shall take up the second and third questions in the next section. But first, let us consider the nonsemantic approaches.

A. *Pragmatics*

In the study of Vedic ritual and mantras, the "relationship be-
tween the expressions and their users or contexts of use" that is
characteristic of pragmatics is certainly a valid field of inquiry. It
is, however, partly concerned with one of those rare questions that
have a relatively simple answer: for insofar as the users are con-
cerned, the relationship is straightforward, since they are invariably
the same in almost all ritual contexts. Like the ritual acts
themselves, most ritual recitations are executed by the Adhvaryu
on behalf of the Yajamāna, although on specific occasions other
priests recite particular pieces. In Soma ceremonies, the *śastra*
recitations are always executed by the Hotā, Maitrāvaruṇa,
Brāhmaṇācchamsin or Acchāvāka priests in accordance with
specific rules. The ritual songs are always chanted by the Udgātā,
with a few exceptions, well-known from the tradition (e.g., the
Subrahmaṇyāhvāna: AGNI I, 369, 386, 596), while the *stuti* or
stotra chants of the Soma ritual are always executed in the same
fashion by the trio of Prastotā, Udgātā and Pratihartā. Were we to
add a list of exceptions and special cases, the information contained
in the present paragraph, suitably formulated, would therefore take
care of pragmatic problems as far as the users are concerned.

As for "contexts of use," the ritual context determines
throughout what is to be recited or chanted, as well as when and
on what occasion. The knowledge of these contexts of use is an im-
portant part of what constitutes a knowledge of the ritual—the
knowledge that distinguishes a ritual specialist from a nonritualist.
But such "pragmatic" information depends on the structure of the
ritual itself, and cannot replace the latter.

A pragmatic analysis of the function of the users of the mantras,
i.e., of the priestly functions, may throw light on their position in
society *outside* the ritual enclosure. But such an analysis pertains to
historical reconstruction and is therefore a diachronic enterprise,
unlike the synchronic analysis that seeks to understand the ritual as
a system. One contemporary scholar who has studied these
historical problems fruitfully is the German Sanskritist Klaus
Mylius. Mylius has, for example, analysed the offices of two
Rigvedic priests who take part in the Soma ceremonies, the Potā

and the Acchāvāka (Mylius 1977, 1982). His analysis led him to conclude that both these priests had a lower status than the majority of the other officiants, but that the Acchāvāka occupied the lower status of the two; he is in fact related to the *vaiśya* class. The Potā is referred to in the Rigveda, where he is assigned menial jobs; the Acchāvāka is of later origin and he is not "elected" but "called." Yet his office cannot have been created long after the Rigveda, as was, for example, the office of the Grāvastut.

It is clear from these examples that a pragmatic analysis may be relevant to historical reconstruction. However, pragmatics does not have the same function here as it has in linguistics or philosophy, because it does not apply to individuals who determine the truth value of a statement, but to priestly functions which are stereotypical roles.

B. *Phonetics and Phonology*

The sounds of the mantras form the subject matter of various ancient treatises attached to the Vedic corpus. Whereas in the study of language, phonetics and phonology are distinguished by a concern, respectively, with "mere" sound and with significant sound (or rather: "sound that makes a difference"), the distinction is less easily maintained with respect to mantras. To maintain the distinction in this domain would beg one of the questions we have posed, viz., whether mantras have meaning. At first sight, the answer to this latter question seemed obvious: they do have meaning. But when we looked more carefully, we noted that this is true only in the sense of historical reconstruction. The mantras are often derived from verses that, in their original context, had meaning. But in the ritual context in which these verses have been transformed into mantras, the original meaning has largely or entirely vanished. This was amply illustrated in the preceding section, and an almost indefinitely large number of similar illustrations could be added.

In view of this situation it is not surprising that ancient Indian ritualists such as Kautsa defended the view that mantras have no meaning (see Staal 1967, 24-25, 45, 47, etc.). This possibility, however, has not been taken seriously by Western scholars, owing to the fact that they fail to distinguish between two rather different questions: the question of the meaning of mantras in their ritual

context, which is the context that defines them as mantras; and the question of the meaning of the expressions of language from which mantras are derived in those cases in which they are derived from language. The situation is similar to that in etymology: the etymology of a word may throw light on its original meaning, but it may have no connexion with its actual meaning or use. This has always been known to Indian and Western linguists, and although it was ignored by some Western philosophers (e.g., Heidegger), it has been re-discovered by others (e.g., Wittgenstein). The conclusion we draw from these conceptual distinctions is that mantras can very well be meaningless even in cases where they are derived from verses that possess meaning.

Using the term "phonology" with reference to mantras but without making any assumption about their meaning, we must now record a remarkable fact: the phonological study of mantras has been one of the great Indian pastimes from the Vedic period onward. In fact, it is likely that the study of the strange and peculiar characteristics of these sounds—strange and peculiar because they are different from ordinary language and seem to deviate from some of its rules—paved the way for the phonological study of "regular" sounds, viz., the sounds of language, and the rules that can account for them, thus leading to the origin of linguistics. This may be explained *a priori*, because man is more puzzled and attracted by the extraordinary than by the ordinary; but it is also borne out by the facts: for the Vedas themselves offered speculations about mantras and language riddles long before a more systematic study of sounds originated in the Prātiśākhya and Śikṣā literatures and in the grammatical works of Pāṇini and his successors. Part of the genius of Pāṇini in fact consists in his recognition that not only the sacred speech of the Vedas, but also ordinary speech is an interesting object of scientific inquiry. This early emphasis on linguistic form explains the grammatical flavor that attaches to almost everything Indian, and certainly to Indian ritual.

The phonological study of the sound of religion as it appears in Indian ritual is therefore definitely promising. This is different however, from Lévi-Strauss' preoccupation with distinctive features and binary opposition as a general method for the analysis of ritual and social structure.

C. *Syntax*

With syntax we come to the heart of the matter: for it is only syntax that provides the tools with the help of which we are in a position to study ritual structure and account for the relationships that obtain between ritual facts. From what we have seen in the previous section, structural relationships between formal expressions are foremost in the minds of Vedic ritualists. In fact, without such knowledge they could not carry out their ritual tasks. It is knowledge of these complex structures that identifies a ritual expert and distinguishes him from outsiders. Actually, the substance of the previous section can be summed up by outlining the structures that make up this knowledge. So let us first try to formulate such a summary, confining ourselves to the ritual applications of Rigveda 9.1.1.

The ritualist, first of all, *knows* this verse. That is, he knows how to recite it, for this is what he learned when he learned the Rigveda by heart as a boy—a knowledge he shares with many other brahmins who also belong (by birth) to the Rigveda but are not ritualists. But there is no traditional transmission of the *meaning* of the verse, and so he does not necessarily know its meaning. If he does, he must be a Sanskrit scholar and it has become a matter of personal interest to him. A practising ritualist who is asked for the meaning of a recitation or song invariably replies: go to a scholar of language or philosophy.

A brahmin who belongs to the Sāmaveda knows more: he knows how the verses of the Rigveda have been transformed into songs. He will probably know various chants derived from that verse, depending on his expertise, and if he is really good, he will know where these occur in the collections of the Sāmavedic corpus— which is large and complicated, as we have seen. He shares such knowledge, however, with other Sāmavedins and it still does not qualify him as a ritualist.

Only the ritual expert or *vaidika* knows in addition to an "ordinary" Rigvedin or Sāmavedin (or Yajurvedin, for that matter) the association between mantras and acts, and when and where in the ritual these have to be inserted and executed. He knows something like the following structure (I say "something like," for he

uses a system of reference rooted in oral tradition and in some respects different from the system used by Western scholars, which presupposes the availability of printed texts):

LANGUAGE   Rigveda 9.1.1

MANTRA   Grāmageyagāna 49.2.7   Araṇyageyagāna 15.7   Arcikā 64.1   Ūhagāna 3.2

                                                         Stuti I   Stuti IV

ACT   Flow of Milk 4   Layer I, Brick 7   Sequence 11   Sequence 11
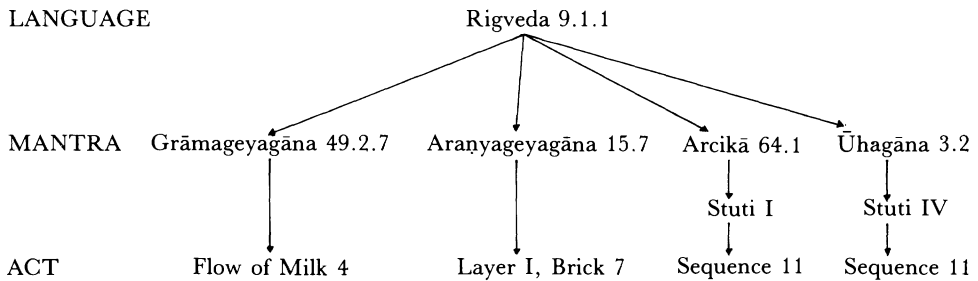
Such a structure makes sense only within the larger pattern of hundreds of similar structures, which together constitute the edifice of the ritual. Vedic ritual makes sense, but it is structural sense. An exhaustive synchronic analysis of the ritual can be given in terms of the structural relationships between such forms, without reference to meaning or external function. Such an analysis will refer to the rules that relate structures to each other, and is therefore syntactic in nature. If and when the system changes (which may be due to a variety of causes, semantic as well as nonsemantic), the rules or the relations between them change, and this can again be studied in syntactic terms. The syntactic approach can therefore completely account for the ritual facts.

(To be continued)

    ² The term *jyotiṣṭoma* may also be used to refer to the *class* of Soma ceremonies of which *agniṣṭoma* is the prototype.

RITUAL, KNOWLEDGE, AND BEING

*Initiation and Veda Study in Ancient India**

Brian K. Smith

I

"Knowledge enormous makes a God of me," wrote Keats. A similar sentiment was expressed in an ancient Indian text where Brahmins were deemed "human gods" (*mānuṣya devas*) by virtue of their study and teaching of the Veda (ŚB 2.2.2.6). Both statements, it seems to me, may be interpreted as indicative not so much of the soteriological power of knowledge—its power to transcend the human condition—as they are of the ontological power of knowledge—its power to help one fully realize one's being. In the ancient Indian context, furthermore, religious knowledge (*vidyā*) was closely associated with, if not inseparable from, ritual action (*karman*) or sacrifice (*yajña*). Sacrificial Vedism can no longer be seen as sterile ritualism in opposition to Vedantic intellectualism and mysticism. It was, rather, a holistic system in which ontology (as well as soteriology) was determined by and expressed through both knowledge and action.

It is the relation between ritual, knowledge, and being in Vedic ritualism that I will explore in this article. I will do so through an investigation of textual accounts of the *upanayana* or "initiation" ritual and the period of life it inaugurated, that of the religious student or *brahmacārin*. There are, I think, three aspects of the initiation that are relevant for an understanding of the topic at hand. First, *upanayana* initiates the young boy into "human society," by which I mean to include both the ontological and sociological consequences of the ritual. (I shall hereafter use the term "socio-ontological" to refer to this effect of the rite.) Secondly, *upanayana* initiates the novice into study of the Veda under the auspices of a teacher, an enterprise that further defines and specifies the very being of the student. Finally, *upanayana* initiates one into the practice of fire sacrifice and the continuing, life-long process of ritual self-

construction. As we will see, these three aspects of initiation may also be considered as three kinds of new "births:" a birth into a particular socio-ontological class, a birth effected by connection to the teacher and the knowledge he imparts, and a birth, or rather series of regenerations, "out of the sacrifice."

The *upanayana* is clearly what might be called a constructive or transformative ritual, and before turning attention to the three nuances of the transformation *upanayana* and *brahmacarya* induce, it might be instructive to explore briefly the exact meaning of the term thus translated, "*saṃskāra.*"

Often rendered "rites of passage," the *saṃskāras* are more than simply leaps from one viable state to another. They are rather rituals of ontological creation, construction, and perfection. The word is derived from the Sanskrit root *kṛ-*, "to do or make," with the integrative prefix *sam-*, and connotes, as Lilian Silburn writes, "the activity which creates forms, adapts them, and makes them perfect" (58).[1] Although the term as designating a specific set of rituals does not appear before the Sūtras (ca. 800-300 B.C.E.), other formations of *sam* + *kṛ* (e.g., *saṃskṛti, saṃskṛta, saṃskaroti, saṃskurute*) to describe ritual action do appear in the Veda, and with much the same meaning.[2]

Saṃskāra rites are performed on either things or people, and in all cases, according to Śabara (commenting on Jaimini 3.1.3) the rite is to make the thing or being fit (*yogya*) for its purpose. Fitness is of two kinds—that which arises by the removal of taints (*doṣāpanayana*) and that which arises through the generation of fresh, inner qualities (*gunāntaropajanana*).[3] According to the *mīmāṃsaka* Mitramiśra, *saṃskāras* are to impart the necessary qualities for the performance of other rituals or to eliminate congenital defects and impurities.[4] Still another definition emphasizes the role of artistic creation played by the rites: "Just as a work of painting gradually unfolds itself on account of the several colors [with which it is drawn], so Brahminhood is similarly brought out by *saṃskāras* performed according to the prescribed rites."[5] Following the ritual philosophers, one might best consider these rituals not as "rites of passage" but as both rituals of healing (eliminating the natural or biological defects of the human self) and rituals of construction (adding new qualities, actualizing latent tendencies, and perfectly in-

tegrating them into an ontological composition).[6] With these considerations in mind, let us now turn to one of the most important of all the *saṃskāras*, the *upanayana* or initiation ceremony.

II

Although *upanayana* is not specifically mentioned in the RV,[7] it does appear as a definite ritual in the AV (11.5) and ŚB (11.3.3; 11.5.4), and the details given in those early texts more or less conform to the ritual explicated in the Gṛhya Sūtras and *dharma* texts. It appears that already at a very early date in Vedic history the *upanayana* and subsequent period of Veda study were regarded as mandatory for the Aryan community.[8] By the time of the Sūtras, *upanayana* was simply called "the *saṃskāra*" (see PGS 2.5.42-43) and according to Gopal "the term [*saṃskāra*] was gradually extended [from its use as a designation of the *upanayana*] to all domestic rites" (254). While many of the *gṛhya* texts begin their treatment of the domestic rituals with an explanation of the marriage ceremony, others (e.g., HGS, BhGS, MGS, GautDhS) begin with the *upanayana*, for, as the commentator Haradatta puts it (on GautDhS 1.6):

> The teacher, expounding upon *upanayana* first and passing over the *saṃskāras* like *garbhādhāna* that precede *upanayana* in time, conveys that *upanayana* is the principal (*prādhānya*) *saṃskāra*. Therefore, even if the *saṃskāras* like *garbhādhāna* did not take place due to adversity of fate, *upanayana* can be performed, but it follows that if *upanayana* be not performed, there is no competency for marriage which follows only after *upanayana*.

Upanayana initiated a young boy into Aryan society; he became, by virtue of the rite, "twice born" (*dvija*), a term that occurs as early as the AV (11.5.3; for later usage, see ĀpDhS 1.1.1.15; GautDhS 1.8; Manu 2.68). In Manu, this "birth from the Veda" is contrasted to the merely biological birth from the mother (2.169-70) and is called the "real" (*satya*) birth (2.148). *Upanayana* was thus a socio-ontological birth in opposition to a defective natural birth, and was designed to rectify biological faults and construct a more substantial existence for the young boy.

The initiation was supposed to occur at the age of eight for a boy born of Brahmin parents, eleven for a Kṣatriya, and twelve for a

Vaiśya, the Śūdras being excluded from the rite.[9] The importance, socially and, I would argue, ontologically, of *upanayana* can be gauged by the depictions of those who don't undergo it. A Brahmin is merely a "Brahmin by birth only" (*jāta*) (BGS 1.7.1; cmp. VaikhGS 1.1) or a "Brahmin by relation only" (*brahma-bandhu*) (ChUp 6.1.1) before true Brahminhood is conferred by the *upanayana*.[10] The uninitiated child, regardless of the class of his natural birth, is equated to those persons who also have had only one birth[11] and are permanently excluded from Aryan society, the Śūdras:

> They do not put any restrictions on the acts of [a child] before the initiation, for he is on the level with a Śūdra before his [second] birth through the Veda (BDhS 1.2.3.6).
> Before initiation [a boy] may follow his inclinations in action, speech, and eating [but he shall] not partake of offerings (GautDhS 2.1).
> No religious rite can be performed by [a boy] before the initiation, because he is on the level with a Śūdra before his birth through the Veda (VasDhS 2.6; cf., ĀpDhS 2.6.15.18-25).

According to the Atri Smṛti (141-42), "By birth everyone is a Śūdra; by the performance of *upanayana* one is called a twice-born." While the Śūdras remain in a permanently child-like and irresponsible position, those born in the other three classes are expected to progress out of the state of in-born defectiveness and realize their inherent proclivities through the timely performance of the ritual *saṃskāra*. If, however, a Brahmin passes his sixteenth year without undergoing initiation, if a Kṣatriya his twenty-second, or a Vaiśya his twenty-fourth, they become *patitasāvitrīkas*, "those for whom there has been no *upanayana* and therefore no instruction in the *gāyatrī* and who are therefore sinful and outside the pale of Aryan societies."[12] According to the texts, such men degenerate instantly into the status of the Śūdra (see esp. JGS 1.12): no twice-born is to initiate or teach them, nor perform sacrifices for them, nor have intercourse or marriage with them.[13] They are to be "shunned with care" according to one authority,[14] and are called "slayers of the *brahman*" and "burial grounds" by another (ĀpDhS 1.1.1.32; 1.1.2.5). Some texts (Manu 2.39; Yāj 1.38) refer to them as "*vrātyas*," recalling to mind those shadowy figures in the Veda one text calls "defective" (*hīna*) and "left behind" (PB 17.1.2).[15]

Because of this "vehemence with which those who failed to undertake the *upanayana* ceremony were condemned," Jan Gonda concludes, rightly, I think, that the ritual was "more or less a compulsory institution" in Vedic and Brahmanic India (1965: 391). Through it one was constituted a twice-born Aryan—a sociological rebirth, to be sure, but also an ontological rebirth as natural defectiveness was replaced by a ritually generated new identity, a birth into true humanity. But within the Aryan order there were socio-ontological distinctions made between classes, and the *upanayana* generated not a generic humanity in the initiate, but rather it created humans of different general types. As the VasDhS (4.1) notes, socio-ontological classes were distinguished not only by nature (*prakṛti-viśiṣṭa*), they were also *made* distinct by the ritual *saṃskāras* (*saṃskāra-viśeṣa*).

This feature of the *upanayana*—that is, the boy's ritual realization of his identity as a member of a particular group—is sometimes overlooked. Class differentiations within the ritual, however, are a predominant feature (consult Chart One). We have seen how the texts specify different ages for the initiation according to in-born class proclivities, and different ages after which initiation may not be performed in the regular manner. It is also recommended that initiation be performed in different seasons: Brahmins undergo *upanayana* in the spring, Kṣatriyas in the hot season, Vaiśyas in autumn.[16] It is no coincidence that these same correlations are also made in the Śrauta Sūtras when discussing the auspicious times for married householders of the different classes to light the sacrificial fires (Dandekar: 1-26). Pandey explains these correlations in this way:

Chart One

	Brahmin	Kṣatriya	Vaiśya
Age for initiation	8	11	12
Last age for Initiation	16	22	24
Metres of Sāvitrī verse	*gāyatrī*	*triṣṭubh*	*jagatī*
Seasons for initiation	spring	hot season	autumn
Upper garment (*uttarīya, ajina*)	black antelope	spotted deer	goat or cow
Lower garment (*vāsa*)	linen or hempen	cotton or linen	woolen
Color of lower garment	reddish brown	red	yellow

Girdle (*mekhalā*)	from *muñja* grass	bowstring	woolen or hempen
Staff (*daṇḍa*)	*palāśa* or *bilva*	*nyagrodha*	*badara* or *udumbara*
Size of staff	reaches top of head	reaches forehead	reaches nose

> These different seasons were symbolical of the temperment and occupation of
> different castes. The moderation of spring symbolized the moderate life of a
> Brahmin; the heat of summer represented the fervour of a kṣatriya; autumn,
> when the commercial life of ancient India reopened after the rainy season,
> suggested the wealth and prosperity of a vaiśya. . .[17]

The individual items of the uniform of the student, given during
the *upanayana* rites, also served to differentiate types of students and
to highlight and actualize particular qualities peculiar to each. The
boy was given an upper garment (*uttarīya*), a lower garment (*vāsa*), a
girdle (*mekhalā*), a staff (*daṇḍa*), and according to only some of the
ancient texts, the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*) that would become so
central to later conceptions of the *upanayana*.[18]

In most cases, the differences in uniform systematically draw on
ancient associations between parts of nature and the qualities ap-
propriate to the different socio-ontological classes. The upper gar-
ment, for example, is to be a skin from the black antelope (*kṛṣṇājina*,
aineya) if the initiate is a Brahmin, from the spotted deer (*raurava*) if
a Kṣatriya, and from a goat or a cow if a Vaiśya.[19] In the
Brāhmaṇa-texts, the black antelope is consistently associated with
Brahmins (AitB 7.23), the *brahman* power (KB 4.11; TB 2.7.1.4;
2.7.3.3), the "lustre of the *brahman*" (*brahmavarcasa*) (PB 17.11.8;
ŚB 9.3.4.14; cf. ĀpDhS 1.1.3.9 and BhGS 1.1), and the sacrifice
(ŚB 1.1.4.3; 3.2.1.8; 3.2.1.28 etc.). Although I have not been able
to cross-reference the identification of the Kṣatriyas and the spotted
deer,[20] presumably the latter represents physical power of the *kṣatra*,
a hypothesis partly confirmed by the variant given in KGS (41.13)
where the skin for the Kṣatriya is to be of the tiger.[21] The tiger is
said to be the embodiment of courage (ŚB 12.7.2.8), the king of the
wild animals (ŚB 12.7.1.8), and the representative of *kṣatra* within
the animal kingdom (AitB 8.6). The relation between the Vaiśya
(agriculturalist/merchant) and the productive and valuable cow or
the prolific goat is obvious. Both the cow-hide and the skin of the
goat are symbols of food (see, e.g., ŚB 7.5.2.6, 43; 6.3.2.4) and the
goat is said to be the very form (*rūpa*) of "increase" or *puṣṭi* (TB
1.3.7.7).

Such systematic identifications are also present in the case of the girdle. In general, the girdle is meant to protect the boy who wears it (GGS 2.10.37; PGS 2.2.8; MGS 1.22.7), to give him strength (TS 6.1.3.3-4), and may have also been a symbolic umbilical cord of the newly "reborn" student (see, e.g., HGS 1.1.4.4). In most texts, the Brahmin's is to be of *muñja*-grass (Saccharum Sara), that of the Kṣatriya from the bow string (*jyā, dhanurjyā*) or the *mūrvā*-hemp from which such strings were made (Sanseviera Rox-burghiana), and the Vaiśya's from wool (*āvī*) or hemp (*śāṇa*).[22] *Muñja*-grass, it would seem, links the Brahmin to the sacrifice, for in the ritual it is used in various capacities (for brooms, cords, seats, purifiers, and the girdle tied around the body of the sacrificer's wife). *Muñja* is apparently quite flammable and was used to make the fire blaze up (see, e.g., BhŚS 11.3.16; MŚS 6.1.3.23; ĀpŚS 15.4.2), thus restoring "vigor" or "life sap" (*ūrj*) to the sacrifice (ŚB 14.1.3.15-16; TB 3.8.1.1; TĀr 5.4.3-4). The identification of the Kṣatriya and the bow-string is quite straightforward: "The bow, truly, is the manly strength (*vīrya*) of the Kṣatriya" (ŚB 5.3.5.30). As for the Vaiśya, hemp appears to suggest proliferation and reproduction (it is likened to the amnion at ŚB 3.2.1.11 and to the chorion at ŚB 6.6.1.24) and wool obviously connects the pastoralist to his domesticated animals. According to one text, the Vaiśya's girdle should be made of rope used for yoking oxen to the plough, emphasizing the agricultural function of this class (ĀpDhS 1.1.2.37).

The staff too serves to create and reinforce class differentiation and hierarchy. It is to be of varying lengths[23] and different woods according to class—*palāśa* (Butea Frondosa) or *bilva* (Aegle Marmelos) for the Brahmin, *nyagrodha* (Ficus Indica) for the Kṣatriya, and *badara* (Zizyphus Jujuba) or *udumbara* (Ficus Glomerata) for the Vaiśya.[24] In the Brāhmaṇas, *palāśa* is frequently identified with the *brahman* (ŚB 1.3.3.19; 2.6.2.8; 5.2.4.18 etc.) or soma (ŚB 3.3.4.10; 6.6.3.7), and is said to instill luminosity (*tejas*) and the lustre of the *brahman* (AitB 2.1). According to the BGS (2.5.18-19), the staff of *Palāśa* is received by the student with the words, "You are soma. Make me a soma-drinker," and that of *bilva* with, "You are the lustre of the *brahman*. You for the lustre of the *brahman*." The *nyagrodha* or banyan tree, with its bending

branches which take root in the ground, was regarded as a resembling form of the Kṣatriya:

> The *nyagrodha* is the *kṣatra* of trees, and the Kṣatriya is the *kṣatra*, for the Kṣatriya here dwells fastened, as it were, to the kingdom, and supported [by it]. And the *nyagrodha* is fastened to the ground, as it were, by its downward growths, and supported [by it] (AitB 7.31; cmp. ŚB 5.3.5.13).

The *nyagrodha* staff is taken with a *mantra* imparting physical vitality or *ojos* (BGS 2.5.20). The Vaiśya receives the staff of *badara* with "You are increase. Put increase in me," and that of *udumbara* with "You are life sap (*ūrj*). Put life sap in me" (BGS 2.5.22-23). The association of *udumbara* with life sap and "food" (*anna*) is well attested in the Brāhmaṇas (see, e.g., AitB 5.24; 7.22 etc.; PB 5.5.2; 6.4.1 etc.; KB 25.15; 27.6; TB 1.2.6.5; 1.3.8.2 etc; ŚB 3.2.1.33; 3.3.4.27 etc.).

Various other rites within the *upanayana* also serve much the same purpose of making distinctions, infusing qualities, and drawing out potentialities. According to JGS (1.12), the lower garment is put on the boy with *mantras* "according to class" (*yathāvarṇa*): Brahmins are dressed with a prayer to Soma for great learning (*mahā śrotra*), Kṣatriyas with one to Indra for great dominion (*mahā rāṣṭra*), and Vaiśyas with a *mantra* requesting Poṣa to deliver great prosperity (*mahā poṣa*). These same qualities are also requested in another rite, the entrusting of the boy to the deities, where the *mantras* are again appropriately modified (see HGS 1.1.4.8).[25]

Finally, we take note of a most important rite within the initiation, the imparting of the *sāvitrī* verse (RV 3.62.10) to the new pupil. According to some texts, this mantra ("We contemplate the excellent glory of the divine Savitṛ; may he inspire our intellect") was to be recited in different metres by the different classes. Brahmins were to learn the verse in the *gāyatrī* metre, Kṣatriyas in the *triṣṭubh*, and Vaiśyas in the *jagatī*.[26] Here again the Sūtras call upon ancient correlations. The *gāyatrī* was directly connected to Brahmins (PB 6.1.6; TS 7.1.1.4), or to the *brahman* or *brahmavarcasa* (KB 17.2.; 17.9; PB 6.9.25; 12.1.2; ŚB 4.1.1.14), or to Agni, priest of the gods (AitB 8.6; KB 9.2; PB 6.1.6; TS 7.1.4). The *triṣṭubh* was systematically associated with Kṣatriyas (TS 7.1.1.5; PB 6.1.8), physical power (*bala*) and manly strength (*vīrya*) (AitB 4.3; KB 11.2; 16.1; etc.), and Indra, king of the gods (AitB 8.6; KB

14.3; 30.2; PB 6.1.8; TS 7.1.1.5). The *jagatī* was likewise connected to Vaiśyas (TS 7.1.1.5; PB 6.1.10), cattle (AitB 3.18; 3.25 etc.; KB 16.2; 17.2 etc.; PB 6.1.10; 18.11.9 etc.; ŚB 8.3.3.3; 12.8.3.13 etc.; TS 7.1.1.5), prosperity in general (ŚB 3.4.1.13), the earth (ŚB 1.8.2.11; 6.2.1.29 etc.), plants (ŚB 1.8.2.11), and the All-gods (AitB 8.6; PB 6.1.10; TS 7.1.1.5).

Another homology was apparently created between the syllabic composition of the metres (the *gāyatrī* is a triplet made up of eight syllables each, the *triṣṭubh* a quartet of eleven syllables per verse, and the *jagatī* a quarter of twelve syllables each) and both the respective ages for initiation of the classes (eight, eleven, and twelve) and the difference between these ages and the last ages for *upanayana* for each class (also eight, eleven, and twelve).[27]

To conclude our observations on the first aspect of the meaning of *upanayana*, we have seen how it functions as an initiation into human society, a birth into socio-ontological existence from natural, biological imperfection and potentiality. One is reborn into the ranks of the fully human, the twice-born, the Aryans. But *upanayana* also makes gradations in its products. Hereditary proclivities and tendencies, passed on from the parents and accompanying the child from conception, are activated in the ritual. *Upanayana* not only constructs an Aryan, it produces a member of a particular class—Brahmin, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya—through those rites aimed at creating a differentiated, hierarchically ordered identity.

III

The second aspect of the *upanayana*, the initiation into the study of the Veda under the guidance of a teacher, is also regarded in ontological terms. It too is a kind of rebirth, generated by the productive power of knowledge. *Upanayana* is variously called the *brahma-saṃskāra* (Manu 7.2), the "*saṃskāra* enjoined by the Veda for a person desirous of attaining knowledge" (ĀpDhS 1.1.1.9), and the "birth out of the *brahman*" (Manu 2.146) more efficacious and real than the biological birth: "Of him who gives biological birth and him who gives [the knowledge of the] Veda, the giver of the Veda is the more venerable father" (Manu 2.146). Or, as the ĀpDhS

(1.1.16.18) puts it, the teacher (*ācārya*) produces the superior (*śreṣṭha*) birth from knowledge, whereas the mother and father produce only the physical body (*śarīra*). Just as one who neglects the *upanayana* degenerates into the status of a Śūdra, so too does one who, forsaking the study of the Veda, turns attention to other sciences falls into the condition of a Śūdra together with his descendants (Manu 2.168). Knowledge of the Veda thus entails more than an intellectual transformation; it too entails an ontological construction of the very being of the student. As Mookerji notes,

> The growth of the whole nature of the boy, and not the growth of his intellect merely, was the objective of this ancient pedagogy. The raw material is received into the workshop after due examination as to its soundness; it is then treated to different processes of manufacture, and finally sent out to the world as a finished product (206).

This new birth "out of the Veda" is sometimes said to be caused by the interaction of the teacher, who imparts the knowledge to the student, and the knowledge itself, which has its own productive power. "They declare that in that birth [at the *upanayana*], the *sāvitrī* verse is this mother and the teacher his father. They call the teacher the father because he gives the Veda" (Manu 2.170-71; cf., VasDhS 2.3-4).

Elsewhere it is the teacher who acts as the mother of the embryonic student. According to the AV (11.7.3), "The teacher, leading [the boy] near him (*upanayamāna*), makes the *brahmacārin* like unto a foetus (*garbha*) within; he bears him in his belly for three nights [the time between the *upanayana* and the teaching of the *sāvitrī*]. The gods gather unto him to see him who is born." There is a similar passage in the ŚB (11.5.4.12): "By laying his right hand on [the pupil], the teacher becomes pregnant [with him]. In the third [night], he is born a Brahmin with the *sāvitrī*." Furthermore, the teacher should remain celibate "lest he generate this Brahmin from shed seed; for, indeed, he who enters into studentship becomes an embryo."[28]

The importance of the relation with the teacher is indicated in the very name for the initiation ceremony. *Upanayana* is a "leading or taking near" of the boy to the teacher for Veda instruction, or an "introduction" of the student to *brahmacarya* by the teacher (see Oldenberg on ŚGS 2.1.1). In the ŚB (11.5.3.13; cf., 11.5.4.1) the

prospective pupil is made to say, "I will enter (*upāyāmi*) as your student, o revered one," and a similar formula is recited within the *upanayana* as it is coded in the Sūtras (see, e.g., PGS 2.2.6: "I have come here (*āgāmi*) for *brahmacarya*. I will be a *brahmacārin*. Cf., HGS 1.2.5.2; JGS 1.12; GGS 2.10.21).

The entrusting of the boy to the teacher places the two in a close relationship comparable or even equivalent to that of kinship. The *upanayana* forges a bond between pupil and teacher very similar to that produced in the marriage *saṃskāra* between bride and groom.[29] Both rituals are "destined to establish an intimate union between two persons hitherto strangers to each other,"[30] and there are, in fact, certain rites that are reduplicated in initiation and marriage (e.g., the touching of the heart and the treading on the stone). Within this union established at *upanayana*, the teacher/father transfers something of his essence to the pupil/son. The former places his hand on the heart of the latter and says, "Your heart shall dwell in my heart, my mind you shall follow with your mind; in my word you shall rejoice with all your heart. May Bṛhaspati join you to me. You shall adhere to me alone. In me your thoughts shall dwell" (HGS 1.2.5.11; cf., PGS 1.8.8; ŚGS 2.4.1; JGS 1.12; VaikhGS 2.6).

This relationship between teacher and student was founded on what Pāṇini calls a *vidyā-sambandha*, the union through knowledge, which was every bit as powerful, if not more so, as the biological link between father and son (the *yoni-sambandha*) (Agrawala: 281). Indeed, from the time of the initiation onward the teacher is treated as a father and the pupil becomes a full-fledged member of the family.[31] According to Manu (2.150, 153):

> That Brahmin who is the giver of the birth through the Veda and the teacher of the prescribed duties becomes by law the father of even an aged man, though he [the teacher] may himself be only a child. . . . For a man destitute of knowledge is indeed a child and he who teacher him the Veda is his father; for they have always said 'child' to an ignorant man, and 'father' to a teacher of the Veda.

The force of the relationship established between teacher and pupil is indicated in rules which prohibit, as being incestuous, marriage between the pupil and the daughters of the teacher (Gonda, 1965: 231) and those which equate *gurutalpa*, the violation of the nuptial

bed of the teacher, with intercourse with one's biological mother (Gampert: 134ff.).

Because the ontological birth of the student was so obviously tied up to the very being of his teacher, it was important to link oneself with the best qualified instructor. As the ĀpDhS (1.1.1.11-12) notes, "He whom a teacher devoid of learning initiates enters from darkness to darkness," and the text goes on to state that a student should seek a teacher in whose family learning is hereditary and who himself is highly learned. Vyāsa specifies that the teacher (*ācārya*) should be a Brahmin, solely devoted to the Veda, a knower of *dharma*, born of a good family, pure, and a *śrotriya*, that is, one who has thoroughly learned one branch of the Veda (cited in Kane: 324-25). In many texts distinctions are made between types of teachers. An *upādhyāya* is one who teaches only a portion of the Veda or Vedāṅgas and does so for pay (Manu 2.141; Yāj 1.35; VasDhS 3.22; Vishnu 29.2); ten times more venerable is the *ācārya* who performs the *upanayana* and teaches the whole recension of the Veda (Manu 2.140, 145; Yāj 1.34; VasDhS 3.21; Vishnu 29.1; GautDhS 1.9-10); and a *guru*, according to Manu (2.149) is "that man who also benefits him by [instruction in] the Veda, be it little or much" (cmp. Yāj 1.34).

The rebirth effected by connection to the Veda was thus first calibrated to the being of the teacher or "father" who helps produce the regeneration of the pupil. The boy becomes reborn into the family of his teacher, in some instances even taking the family name of the preceptor,[32] and in this way links his identity to that of the teacher. But it is also the case that the body of knowledge absorbed by the student during *brahmacarya* was instrumental in constituting one's identity, one's very being. If one was ontologically joined with the being of the teacher, one was at the same time defined by the branch of the Veda, the *śākhā*, to which the teacher was affiliated. Individuals, like texts, were in ancient India associated with one Veda and within that Veda one recension or school. Learning was much more than a mere acquisition; it was to be thoroughly incorporated into one's very self. As Max Müller put it long ago, "To read a *śākhā* means not only to go over it but to take possession of it" (94). The confluence of knowledge of a particular kind and personal identity is indicated in the term "*śākhāraṇḍa*,"

"traitor to the *śākhā.*" As Kane observes by way of explaining the term, "That person who does not study a Vedic *śākhā* studied by his ancestors and studies another *śākhā* altogether was called '*śākhāraṇḍa.*' Whatever religious rites a man did with the procedure and mantras of another *śākhā* giving up his own *śākhā* becomes [sic] fruitless" (328).

From one point of view, the *upanayana* initiated *brahmacarya* and the study of one's Veda over the course of several years. More precisely, however, the *upanayana* was but one in a series of initiations by which the student gradually became qualified to study various portions of the Veda. Technically, according to many Sūtras, the *upanayana* ritual served only to inaugurate a vow, lasting from as long as a year to as little as three days or less, qualifying one to learn only the *sāvitrī* verse. This was known as the *sāvitrī vrata*, and during the course of *brahmacarya* it was to be followed by other vows, each preceded by a kind of reduplicated *upanayana* (see, e.g., GGS 3.1.10), for learning various parts of the Veda.[33]

The period of *brahmacarya*, lasting generally for twelve years, produced a new being, one transformed in the first place by association with the teacher and secondly by the observances and learning that takes place in those years. At the end of *brahmacarya*, the student undergoes the *samāvartana* ceremony, whose chief component is a ceremonial bath or *snāna*, and thus becomes a *snātaka* or graduate. But just as *upanayana* creates socio-ontological beings of different sorts, the rebirth effected by studenthood also is of distinct varieties.

Several texts distinguish between *vidyā-snātakas* (those who have mastered the Veda), *vrata-snātakas* (those who have fulfilled the vows), and *vidyā-vrata-snātakas* (those who have completed both Veda study and the vows), the last named being superior to the other two (PGS 2.5.32-35; GGS 3.5.21-23; BGPariS 1.15.1; ĀpDhS 1.11.30.1-3). Statements of this sort indicate that some students graduated with only partial knowledge of the Veda, having satisfied only the requirement of the vows. Other texts make a distinction between the *śrotriya*, who has mastered one recension of the Veda, and the even more distinguished *vedapāraga*, who knows both the Veda and the six Vedāṅgas (GautDhS 5.20; Manu 7.85).

Some scholars have speculated that from an early date there was probably a division among students who, like the *vedapāraga*, con-

centrated on the mere memorization of an enormous amount of tex-
tual material, and those who memorized less but knew the meaning
of what they had learned.[34] The ancient texts themselves, however,
emphasize that knowing the meaning of the Veda is either required
before a student can end his studies (see, e.g., MGS 1.2.8), or that
it is one of the key features in the hierarchy of graduates. Manu
(12.103) declares:

> Those who have memorized the Veda are superior to those who have not;
> those who retain memory of the Veda are superior to those who only studied
> [and then forgot] it; those who know its meaning are superior to those who
> simply retain it in memory, and those who perform what the meaning of the
> Veda dictates [i.e., sacrifices] are superior to those who know its meaning.[35]

That individuals were hierarchically distinguished and classified
according to the kind and quantity of knowledge they incorporated
during the period of Veda study is strongly suggested by an impor-
tant passage in BGS (1.7.1ff.). The text begins by noting "Up until
the time of initiation a boy born of Brahmin parents is called [a
Brahmin only] by birth" (cmp. VaikhGS 1.1.: "The son begotten
of a Brahmin father and a Brahmin woman. . . is born merely a
son."). Next, the text claims that "A follower of vows (*vratānucārin*)
who has just been initiated and who has studied something from the
Veda [is called] a Brahmin" (BGS 1.7.2; cmp. VaikhGS 1.1: "Be-
ing initiated, he is, as soon as he has learned the verse addressed to
Savitṛ, a Brahmin."). More exacting gradations follow, based en-
tirely on the extent of learning and the kinds of texts learned: the
śrotriya is one who knows an entire *śākhā* of the Veda; the *anūcāna*
(cf., BDhS 1.2.3.36) knows in addition the six Vedāṅgas (and is
thus equal to the *vedapāraga* cited above); the *ṛṣikalpa* has also incor-
porated the *kalpa sūtras*; one who knows all the above plus the
"*sūtras* and *pravacana*" (the latter term referring to the Śrauta Sūtra
of the school) is known as a *bhrūṇa*; and one who knows all four
Vedas becomes a *ṛṣi*. In BGS 1.7.8, the section concludes by stating
"After this [one becomes] a god (*deva*)."

To summarize the second aspect of Vedic initiation, the initia-
tion into Veda study and life as a student under the teacher results
in a rebirth, an ontological change in the being of the student, but
one which further differentiates and hierarchically ranks human be-
ings. The student's identity is shaped by the particular teacher he is

closely associated with and by the Vedic school with which he is af-filiated. And students emerge as *snātakas* of different sorts—according to whether or not they have completed both study and vows; according to whether or not they have an understanding of what they have learned; and according to the quality and quantity of textual knowledge they have incorporated into themselves.

IV

The third sense in which *upanayana* and *brahmacarya* constitute an initiation involves the connection to the all important Vedic sacrifice. *Upanayana* inaugurates not only the study of the Veda but also the daily practice of fire sacrifice, a practice that will continue, ideally, throughout one's life. And this connection to the sacrifice is another element of the rebirth of the initiate, for in Vedic India the sacrifice was the ontological instrument par excellence, creating and regenerating true being out of the naturally defective.

In some texts the period of Veda study is homologized to a sacrificial session; that is, *brahmacarya* is regarded as a kind of sacrifice. In the ChUp (8.5.1-2), for example, we read that

> What people call 'sacrifice' (*yajña*) is really *brahmacarya*, for only through *brahmacarya* does he who is a knower (*yo jñātā*) find that [knowledge]. And what people call a 'sacrificial oblation' (*iṣṭa*) is really *brahmacarya*, for only after having searched (*iṣṭvā*) through *brahmacarya* does one find the *ātman*. And what people call the 'protracted sacrificial session' (*sattrāyaṇa*) is really *brahmacarya*, for only through *brahmacarya* does one find the protection (*trāṇa*) of the real (*sat*) *ātman*.

A comparable passage comes from the ŚB (11.3.3.2):

> He who enters *brahmacarya* enters into a long sacrificial session (*dīrgha-sattra*). The stick of fuel he places on the fire in entering thereupon is the opening offering; and that [which he places on the fire] when he is about to bathe is the concluding offering; and what [sticks of fuel] there are [placed on the fire] between these, are his [offerings] of the sacrificial session.

Inaugurated by the *upanayana*, the "sacrifice" which is *brahmacarya* is, like all Vedic sacrifices, concluded with a gift to the "priest," the teacher, specifically called a "*dakṣiṇā*" ("sacrificial fee") in some texts (ĀpDhS 1.2.7.19; JGS 1.12). And just as a soma sacrifice ends with a ceremonial bath (*avabhṛtha*), so does the period of *brahmacarya* end with the bath at the *samāvartana*. Some

other distinctive practices of the *brahmacārin* are also equated to the
elements of the sacrificial ritual. Alms which are begged by the stu-
dent and brought to the teacher are regarded as "oblations" (*havis*)
placed in the "*āhavanīya* fire" which is the mouth of the teacher
(ĀpDhS 1.1.3.43-44; cmp. Manu 2.231).[36] And in a well-known
passage from the ŚB, the daily recitation of the Veda is regarded as
a "sacrifice to the *brahman*" (*brahma-yajña*) (cf., Malamoud), one of
the five "great sacrifices" also known as "great sacrificial sessions"
(*mahāsattras*, see ŚB 11.5.6.1):

> Now for the sacrifice to the *brahman*. The sacrifice to the *brahman* is one's daily
> recitation of the Veda. Speech is the *juhū*-spoon of this sacrifice to the *brahman*;
> mind is the *upabhṛt*. The eye is the *dhruvā*, intelligence the *sruva*. Truth is its
> concluding bath, the heavenly world its concluding rites (ŚB 11.5.6.3; cf.,
> 11.5.6.4-9; BDhS 2.6.11.7; ĀpDhS 1.4.12.3).

Initiation and *brahmacarya* are not only regarded metaphorically
as a kind of sacrifice, they also mark the beginning of actual
sacrificial performances. The fact that initiation was, at least in
part, an initiation into the fire sacrifice is indicated by the ancient
practice of the prospective student approaching a teacher with
sacrificial fuel in hand to mark his desire to be initiated (see, e.g.,
ŚB 11.5.3.13; ChUp 4.4.5; KauṣUp 4.19; MuṇḍUp 1.2.12;
PraśnaUp 1.1).

The connection with the sacrificial fire is established at the
upanayana ritual. There the student is required to offer fuel sticks in
the fire either silently, that is, without recitation of a *mantra*, or with
a verse requesting Agni Jātavedas to grant long life, splendor, in-
crease, faith, insight, and other qualities to the new sacrificer (Lal).
According to the ŚB (11.5.4.5) the initiate is to put on fuel in order
to "enkindle his very self with fiery energy (*tejas*) and the lustre of
the *brahman*." Elsewhere in that text it is said that by offering the
fuel stick he redeems that part of himself entrusted to Agni, which is
in the process "perfected" (*saṃskṛtya*) (ŚB 11.3.3.3-4). Another rite
in which the student is conjoined to the sacrifice has him hold on to
the teacher while the latter offers oblations of clarified butter (PGS
2.3.2), the dregs then poured in the boy's mouth with the *mantra*,
"*Bhūh*, the Ṛk-verses, *svāhā*! *Bhuvaḥ*, the Yajur-formulas, *svāhā*!
Suvaḥ, the Sāman-chants, *svāhā*!" (JGS 1.12). And according to
another text, after the boy has been formally initiated he is to offer,

on his own, oblations of cooked food to Indra for intelligence and immortality (BGS 2.5.29).

The fire set at the time of *upanayana* is to be kept and tended by the boy for the period of the *sāvitrī vrata*, usually lasting three days. According to most teachers, that fire is then extinguished. But a principal part of the subsequent duties incumbent upon the *brahmacārin* was daily to gather the firewood necessary for the teacher's sacrifice and to tend the ever-burning domestic fire in his teacher's home. Twice daily the student was to place fuel on his teacher's fire as a kind of simple and small scale sacrifice of his own. So important was this duty that its neglect for several days necessitated a repetition of the *upanayana* (GopB 2.6; Manu 2.186-87; cf., ŚB 11.3.3.1).

Among some ritual teachers there was a view that went further in linking the *brahmacārin* to sacrifice. In ĀśvGS (1.9.1) it is stated that the pupil could, on his own, perform the twice daily *agnihotra*, thus fully and directly integrating him into the Vedic sacrificial cult at the *gṛhya* level. Kane writes, with reference to this passage, "The student had not only to offer *samidhs* on his own account into the fire, but he had to help his *ācārya* in the latter's worship of fire by bringing fuel and by offering oblations for his *ācārya* when the latter was away on a journey or was ill" (307). In the traditions of Baudhāyana and Bhāradvāja, moreover, the fire lit at the boy's *upanayana* was not extinguished at the end of the ceremony but was preserved throughout *brahmacarya* and marriage, eventually becoming the domestic fire of the married householder.

> In the fire that he establishes at the time of the *upanayana*, in that [very fire he offers oblations] at the time of the observance of the vows, in that [fire he offers] at the time of the bath concluding studentship, in that [fire he offers] at the marriage ceremony, and in that [same fire he offers] the [oblations of] the domestic rituals (*gṛhyāṇi karmāṇi*) (BGS 2.6.18-18)[37]

In this last cited case the continuity of one's being is represented by the continuity of one's fire established at the time of the "second birth." Each stage in the ritual life, however, is distinguished as the boy gradually attains greater degrees of independence and self-identity. The *brahmacārin*, whose budding identity is still largely conflated with and subsumed within that of the teacher, is allowed to sacrifice only with the fuel sticks and with the minimal ritual ut-

terances known as the *vyāhṛtis* ("*om*," "*bhūḥ*," "*bhuvaḥ*," and
"*suvaḥ*"). Beginning with the concluding bath up until the time of
the marriage, the *snātaka* daily sacrifices with oblations of clarified
butter, again with the *vyāhṛtis* as *mantras*. Only from the marriage
onward, when the *snātaka* has been reconstituted as a fully indepen-
dent *gṛhasthin* or householder with lordship over his domestic do-
main,[38] is the daily sacrifice made with food offerings, accompanied
by *mantras* of direct address to the gods ("To Agni, *svāhā*! To Pra-
jāpati, *svāhā*!") (BGS 2.6.19-21). In this way the ritual prerogatives
vis-à-vis the sacrificial fire are enlarged as the sacrificer moves from
the relatively immature state of Vedic student to the responsibilities
and privileges of a married householder.

It is through initiation to the fire sacrifice that the process of on-
tological development and refinement is extended beyond
brahmacarya to the whole life of the individual. For if the *upanayana*
saṃskāra and the period of Veda study are viewed as a kind of
sacrifice, the sacrificial ritual is also seen as a kind of *saṃskāra*, fur-
ther transforming and perfecting the selves of those who participate
in it. In the GautDhS (8.14-21), sacrifices of various kinds
(domestic, *śrauta*, and soma) are all reckoned among that text's
count of forty *saṃskāras*, indicating a commonality of function. And
in the Brāhmaṇas (e.g., AitB 6.27; KB 3.8; ŚB 11.2.6.13) the
sacrificial ritual is said to construct, perfect, and make fit (*sam* + *kṛ*)
the sacrificer's *ātman* or self (Staal; Smith, 1985a).

Just as the *upanayana* constitutes a new birth for the initiate, so
too does participation in the fire sacrifice produce yet another on-
tological regeneration or transformation. So it is that Manu will
declare that there are not two but three births for the proper Aryan:
"According to the Veda, the first birth of an Aryan is from the
mother; the second [occurs] on the tying of the girdle of *muñja-grass*
[i.e., the *upanayana*]; and the third on the initiation to the perfor-
mance of sacrifice (*yajña-dīkṣā*)" (2.170).[39] Other texts say more
categorically that "Unborn, truly, is [natural] man. He is really
born through the sacrifice" (MS 3.6.7; cf., JUB 3.14.8) and "Born
out of the sacrifice, the sacrificer frees himself from death. The
sacrifice becomes his [new] self (*ātman*)" (ŚB 11.2.2.5).

The sacrificial ritual heals and perfects natural or "unborn"
man and constructs for him an *ātman* shaped by the dimensions of

the ritual (''The sacrifice becomes his [new] self'') (cf., Smith, 1985b). Within this birthing process, there is, in soma sacrifices, another ritual rebirth, the *dīkṣā* or consecration of the sacrificer. The embryological symbolism surrounding the *dīkṣā* (Gonda, 1965: 315ff.; Eliade: 54-55; Kaelber)—the sacrificer is made to go into a hut said to be a ''womb,'' he is covered with a garment likened to the caul and a black antelope skin equated with the placenta, etc.—graphically emphasizes the rebirth ''out of the sacrifice.'' The similarities between the *dīkṣā*, the initiation into a particular sacrifice, and the *upanayana*, the initiation into the sacrificial cult in general, have often been observed by scholars, among them Jan Gonda (1965). Gonda concludes that there were ''two stages of 'initiation' which could supply the wants of Vedic man—the *upanayana* by which young men became prepared for full membership in the socioreligious community, and the *dīkṣā* by which the married householder was transfigured'' (1965: 432).[40]

We have seen how *upanayana* and *brahmacarya* effect an ontological change in the initiate, constituting him as an Aryan by placing him in relation to the teacher and the knowledge he represents and imparts, and to the sacrificial ritual. We have also seen how this rebirth is particularized in order to differentiate and hierarchically order the types of human beings thus created. Aryans are made into members of one or another of the three twice-born classes at *upanayana*, and in the period of Veda study they are further distinguished by the type and amount of knowledge they absorb. The third aspect of the rebirth, the ontological transformation wrought by the power of sacrifice, also involves the creation of products of different kinds. Graduates differentiated in the BGS, cited above, according to the texts they have mastered are also separated by the sacrifices they are qualified and able to perform subsequent to the marriage and the establishment of the sacred fire(s).

A *śrotriya*, defined by BGS and others as one who has learned one recension of the Veda, is defined in the following way in the VaikhGS (1.1): ''When he has mastered the Veda, and when the *saṃskāras* relating to the body, up through the marriage ceremony, have been performed on him, and, if he performs himself the domestic sacrifices (*pākayajñas*), he is called a *śrotriya*.'' The *anūcāna*,

who was defined by BGS as the knower of the Veda and Vedāṅgas, is characterized by VaikhGS as the performer of *śrauta* ceremonies (*haviryajñas*), that is, he is an *āhitāgni*. The *bhrūṇa*, who according to BGS incorporates additionally knowledge of the "*sūtras* and *pravacana*," is the soma sacrificer according to VaikhGS. Taken together, the two texts suggest that the type and amount of knowledge appropriated and internalized by the student determines the type of sacrifices the future householder may perform, which in turn play a part in the composition of his identity.

Upanayana and *brahmacarya*, together with the marriage *saṃskāra*, qualify the householder to set the fire(s) and perform the sacrifices that will continue the ontological process of development and refinement of being, in both this life and the next. But sacrifices of different kinds generate (and regenerate) different kinds of sacrificers. "The sacrifice becomes his [new] self;" that is, the dimensions of the sacrificer's self or being are correlative to the rituals he sponsors and participates in. Sacrifice thus perpetuates the ontological process that begins with *upanayana*, but in Vedic India it creates beings of different sorts, hierarchically ranked and ordered in relation to relative knowledge and to the degree of ritual realization.

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[1] Cmp. Gonda (1989: 364): "The untranslatable term *saṃskāra* is etymologically related to the verb *saṃskaroti* which expresses the general meaning of 'composing, making perfect, preparing properly and correctly with a view to a definite purpose.'"

[2] See, e.g., RV 5.76.2 (where the *gharma* vessel is made *saṃskṛta*), ŚB 1.1.4.10 (where the offering is made *saṃskṛta* before it is presented to the gods), and below.

[3] The Tantravārtika on Jaimini 3.8.9, cited in Kane (190-91).

[4] Cited in Kane (191). Cf., Manu 2.26-28 and Yāj 1.13.

[5] Parāśara Smṛti 8.19. The citation is also quoted in Murthy (141). Cf., Kane (191): "The *saṃskāras* had been treated from very ancient times as necessary for unfolding the latent capacities of man for development."

[6] Cf., Pandey (16-17): *Saṃskāras* are "religious purificatory rites and ceremonies for sanctifying the body, mind, and intellect of an individual, so that he may become a full-fledged member of the community. But the Hindu Saṃskāras also combine a number of preliminary considerations and rites and other accompanying regulations and observances, all aiming at not only the formal purification of the body but at sanctifying, impressing, refining, and perfecting the entire individuality of the recipient."

⁷ There are references to *brahmacarya*, however. See RV 3.8.4 and 10.109.5.

⁸ As early as TS 6.3.10.5 a Brahmin was said to have been born with three debts, one to the seers (*r̥ṣis*) paid off through *brahmacarya*.

⁹ For the ages for *upnayana*, reckoned either from conception or birth, see ĀśvGS 1.19.1-4; ŚGS 2.1.1-5; BGS 2.5.2; BhGS 1.1; HGS 1.1.1.2-3; ĀpGS 4.10.2-3; VaikhGS 2.3; VGS 5.1-2; MGS 1.22.1; PGS 2.2.1-3; GGS 2.10.1-3; KhGS 2.4.1-6; ĀpDhS 1.1.1.19; BDhS 1.2.3.7-9; Manu 2.36; VasDhS 11. 49-51; Gaut-DhS 1.5, 11. For optional ages for the attainment of different qualities, see BGS 2.5.5; VGS 5.1-2; JGS 1.12; ĀpDhS 1.1.120-26; Manu 2.37; GautDhS 1.6.

¹⁰ Cf., VasDhS: Brahmins who don't learn the Veda are equal to Śūdras (3.1); they do not deseve the name Brahmin (3.3); and they are like wooden elephants or leather antelopes which "have nothing but the name ['Brahmin,' 'elephant,' or 'antelope']" (3.11; cf., Manu 2.157).

¹¹ For Śūdras as *ekaja*, "once born," see Manu 10.4 and GautDhS 10.50.

¹² The definition is Kane's (376). For the ages before which *upanayana* must be performed see ĀśvGS 1.19.5-7; ŚGS 2.1.6-8; BGS 2.5.3-4; VaikhGS 2.3; VGS 5.3; PGS 2.5.36-38; GGS 2.10.4; KhGS 2.4.6; ĀpDhS 1.1.1.27; BDhS 1.2.3.12; Manu 2.38; VasDhS 11.71-73; GautDhS 1.12-13.

¹³ See ĀśvGS 1.19.9; ŚGS 2.1.10-13; VGS 5.3; PGS 2.5.40 GGS 2.10.6; Manu 2.40; VasDhS 11.75.

¹⁴ Vyāsa, cited in Mookerji (176).

¹⁵ For the *vrātyas*, consult Hauer. For a more recent and iconoclastic study, see Heesterman (1962). For the concept of defective human beings in Vedism (i.e., those outside of the sacrificial structure), see Smith (1985a).

¹⁶ See, e.g., ĀpGS 4.10.4; HGS 1.1.1.4; VaikhGS 2.3; BDhS 1.2.3.10; ĀpDhS 1.1.1.19. BGS 2.5.6 and BhGS 1.1 also allow for the initiation of the *rathakāra* or "chariot-maker," the offspring of a Vaiśya man and Śūdra woman. His initiation should occur in the rainy season. For other stipulations on the time for *upanayana*, see HGS 1.1.1.5 and BhGS 1.1.

¹⁷ ". . . and the easy time of rains indicated facility for a chariot-maker" (Pandey: 127).

¹⁸ It appears that the earlier practice was to use the upper garment to serve the function later taken by the *yajñopavīta*. See ĀpDhS 2.2.4.21-22 and Kane (289-91). Pandey (132) is wrong when he writes that "None of the Gr̥hyasūtras contains the prescription of wearing the Sacred Thread." See ŚGS 2.2.3; BGS 2.5.7; BhGS 1.1; and VGS 5.8.

¹⁹ ĀśvGS 1.19.10; ŚGS 2.1.2-5; BGS 2.5.16; HGS 1.1.4.7; BhGS 1.1; VaikhGS 2.4; PGS 2.5.17-19; GGS 2.10.9; JGS 1.12; ĀpDhS 1.1.3.3-6; BDhS 1.2.3.14; VasDhS 11.61-63; GautDhS 1.16.

²⁰ PB (7.5.7-10; 12.4.24-26) connects it with cattle which one would assume would suggest an association with Vaiśyas, not Kṣatriyas.

²¹ Cf., Rāghavānanda's commentary on Manu 2.41 where he glosses *ruru* with *vyāghra* (tiger).

²² ĀśvGS 1.19.12; ŚGS 2.1.15-17; BGS 2.5.13; HGS 1.1.1.17; BhGS 1.1; VaikhGS 2.4; VGS 5.7; BDhS 1.2.3.13; Manu 2.42; VasDhS 11.5.8-10; Gaut-DhS 1.15. Cmp. PGS 2.5.21-23; GGS 2.10.10; JGS 1.12.

²³ ĀśvGS 1.19.13; GautDhS 1.26; VasDhS 11.55-57; Manu 2.146; BDhS 1.2.3.15; For the inverse, see ŚGS 2.1.21-23.

²⁴ ŚGS 2.1.18-20; BGS 2.5.17; BhGS 1.1; ĀpGS 4.11.16; HGS 1.1.1.17; VaikhGS 2.4; JGS 1.12; ĀpDhS 1.1.1.38; VasDhS 11.52-54. Cmp. ĀśvGS 1.9.13; VGS 5.27; PGS 2.5.25-27; GGS 2.10.11; Manu 2.45; GautDhS 1.22-23.

[25] For other examples of *mantras* modified according to class in rites of the *upanayana*, see ŚGS 2.2.11-15 and VaikhGS 2.4. For different begging formulas used by religious students of different classes, see BGS 2.5.48-51; VaikhGS 2.8; VGS 5.28; PGS 2.5.2-4; BDhS 1.2.3.17; ĀpDhS 1.1.3.28-30; Manu 2.49; VasDhS 1.1.68-70; GautDhS 2.36. For different salutes adopted by *brahmacārins* of different classes, see ĀpDhS 1.2.5.16.

[26] ŚGS 2.5.4-7; MGS 1.22.13; PGS 2.3.7-9; BDhS 1.2.3.11. According to some texts (VGS 5.26; KGS 41.20) wholly different verses were to be imparted to the different classes. Cf., Mookerji (182) and Kane (302ff.).

[27] Oldenberg, commenting on ŚGS 2.1.1, writes, "The number of years given for the Upanayana of persons of the three castes (Brāhmaṇas 8-16, Kṣatriyas 11-22, Vaiśyas 12-24) is evidently derived from the number of syllables of the three metres which are so very frequently stated to correspond to the three castes, to the three gods or categories of gods (Agni, Indra, Viśve devās), etc., viz. the Gāyatrī, the Trishṭubh, and the Jagatī." Oldenberg goes on to opine caustically, "This is a very curious example, showing how in India phantastical speculations like those regarding the mystical qualities of the metres, were strong enough to influence the customs and institutions of real life."

[28] In the next verse (ŚB 11.5.4.17) the student is said to be born from the mouth of the teacher. Cf., VasDhS (2.5): "Of two kinds is the seed (*retas*) of a man learned in the Veda—that which is above the navel and that which is below. With that above the navel his offspring is born when he initiates him. . . . With that below the navel his offspring of the body are born. Therefore they never say to a learned Brahmin who teaches the Veda, 'You are without offspring.'"

[29] Manu (2.67) declares that marriage is the *upanayana* of women, and life with the husband is equated to the boy's stay with the teacher in *brahmacarya*.

[30] Oldenberg, on ŚGS 2.3.5. Cf., William Harman's unpublished paper, "The Marriage *Saṃskāra*: What it Is and What it Does."

[31] "The admission of a pupil was not a source of income to the teacher but an addition of a member to his family like that caused by the birth of a son" (Mookerji: 202). The teacher should be treated as one would treat his mother or father (ĀpDhS 1.4.14.6; VasDhS 2.10) and the teacher should love the pupil as he would his own son (ĀpDhS 1.2.8.24).

[32] This practice was known to both Pāṇini and Patañjali. See Agrawala (285) and Puri (145).

[33] For the Veda *vratas* of the Sāmavedic tradition, see GGS 3.1.28-31; KhGS 2.5.17; and JGS 1.16-17; for those of the Ṛg Veda, ŚGS 2.11-12; and for those of the various recensions of the Yajur Veda, BGS 3.2-4; MGS 1.23; VGS 7.17-22; KGS 42.1-44.4; and VaikhGS 2.9-11.

[34] See Bühler's discussion (xlvi-xlix), and, more recently, Heesterman (1978).

[35] Cf., ĀpDhS 1.11.30.5 where the rewards of giving gifts to *snātakas* vary depending on the relative learning of the recipient. For other citations regarding the importance of knowing the meaning of what one has memorized, consult Kane (356-57).

[36] Cf., ĀpDhS 1.1.4.2-4 where the portion of alms consumed by the student is called "remnants of sacrificial oblations" (*havirucchiṣṭha*), and other materials collected by the student and turned over to the teacher (such as fuel sticks) are referred to as "*dakṣiṇās*." "This is the sacrifice performed daily by the *brahmacārin*." For the teacher as sacrificial fire, see ĀpDhS 1.1.3.42; VasDhS 7.5-6; and GautDhS 3.6-8.

[37] Cf., BGParis 1.16.15-16. For the Bhāradvājins, see Kashikar (68).

[38] By lighting the domestic fire he becomes "chief" of the domain (*paramesthin*) (GGS 1.1.12) or "personally superior" (*svāyam jyāyān*) to the other members of the household (ŚGS 1.1.5). The setting of one's own domestic fire signals and actualizes the change of a dependent member of another's household to a status of lordship over some domain, limited though it may be. Setting the *śrauta* fires represents a further extension of that lordship.

[39] For the idea that the three "births" are the biological, the sacrificial, and the birth into the "divine self" (*daiva ātman*) that occurs at the time of death, see ŚB 11.2.1.1; AitĀr 2.5; and JUpB 3.11.

[40] Cmp. Gonda (1965: 317): "Since the sacrificer is already 'twice born' by virtue of the *upanayana*, this means that the purpose of the *dīkṣā* is to 'regenerate' him so that he can share in the sacred."

ABBREVIATIONS

AitĀr	Aitareya Āraṇyaka
AitB	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
ĀpDhS	Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra
ĀpGS	Āpastamba Gṛhya Sūtra
ĀpŚS	Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra
ĀśvGS	Āśvlāyana Gṛhya Sūtra
AV	Atharva Veda Saṃhitā
BDhS	Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra
BGS	Baudhāyana Gṛhya Sūtra
BGPariS	Baudhāyana Gṛhya Paribhāṣā Sūtra
BhGS	Bhāradvāja Gṛhya Sūtra
BhŚS	Bhāradvāja Śrauta Sūtra
ChUp	Chandogya Upaniṣad
GautDhS	Gautama Dharma Sūtra
GGS	Gobhila Gṛhya Sūtra
GopB	Gopatha Brāhmaṇa
HGS	Hiraṇyakeśi Gṛhya Sūtra
Jaimini	Jaimini Pūrvamīmāṃsā Sūtra
JGS	Jaiminīya Gṛhya Sūtra
JUpB	Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa
KGS	Kāṭhaka Gṛhya Sūtra
KB	Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa
KauṣUp	Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad
KhGS	Khādira Gṛhya Sūtra
MGS	Mānava Gṛhya Sūtra
MŚS	Mānava Śrauta Sūtra
Manu	Manu Smṛti
MuṇḍUp	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad
PB	Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa
PGS	Pāraskāra Gṛhya Sūtra
PraśnaUp	Praśna Upaniṣad
RV	Ṛg Veda Saṃhitā
ŚGS	Śānkhāyana Gṛhya Sūtra
ŚB	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa

TĀr   Taittirīya Āraṇyaka
TB   Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa
TS   Taittirīya Saṃhitā
VaikhGS   Vaikhānasa Gṛhya Sūtra
VGS   Vārāha Gṛhya Sūtra
VasDhS   Vasiṣṭha Dharma Sūtra
Vishnu   Viṣṇu Gṛhya Sūtra
Yāj   Yājñavalkya Smṛti

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VERSUCH ZU EINER THEORIE DES AVATĀRA

Mensch gewordener Gott oder Gott gewordener Mensch?[1]

RAINER SEEMANN

I

"Gott kann nicht erkannt werden durch Beweis und Argumente, sondern wie der Duft einer Blume kann man Ihn intuitiv und unmittelbar erfassen."
(Jayākhya Saṃhitā 4, 76)

Schon lange mag es den aufgeklärten Geist eines Suchers verwirrt haben, wenn er mit dem Begriff *Avatāra* konfrontiert wurde. Der Mensch, so wird sich mancher denken, war nie müde in seiner Bestrebung, dem Edlen überhöhende Namen umzuhängen und so fand sich auch für den Menschen, den wir gewöhnlicherweise als Guru oder Meister verehren und achten, eine Idee, seinen Glanz nicht nur durch bloß Gegenwärtiges wie seine Tugend, Reinheit und Kraft zu vermehren, sondern *mit Bezug auf seine Abstammung ihn unsterblich zu machen.*[2]

Im religiösen Sinne verkörpert der Avatāra-Gedanke wohl einen Höhepunkt in der Entwicklung der Gottesvorstellungen. Nach dieser Idee soll Gott selbst in Seiner unendlichen Güte in Zeiten der Not und des Sittenverfalls zur Erde *herabsteigen*, um dem Guten mit Seiner persönlichen Anwesenheit zum Durchbruch zu verhelfen.[3]

Die bedeutendsten Neuinterpretationen des Avatāra-Gedankens wurden vor allem von S. Radhakrishnan und Aurobindo geleistet.[4,5,6]

Doch mir scheint im Gegensatz zu diesen Konzepten der Liebesgedanke, die Idee von der übermenschlichen Güte und *Anteilnahme Gottes* am Leid der Menschen, *die Gnade*, der zentrale Gedanke dieses religiös so erhebenden Konzeptes zu sein.[7]

Die Gottheit wird hier nicht mehr als furchterregender Dinosaurier gedacht, den es durch reichliche Opfergaben zu besänftigen

gilt, sondern hier widerfährt den edlen Seiten menschlicher Existenz ein wohltuendes Echo in einem Gottesbild, das dem Menschsein neue Maßstäbe setzen sollte. Der beispiellose Auftrag Christi, nach dessen Geist Gott seinen Sohn herabschickt, um die Menschheit zu einer höheren Dimension des Geistes zu führen, erfährt im Hinduismus eine Steigerung insofern, als nicht nur ein Teilaspekt Gottes sich auf Erden inkarniert, sondern die *Gottheit in Ihrer Trinität* sich den Menschenseelen zuwendet.[8]

Je wertvoller ein Juwel ist, desto schwieriger wird es, sich eines wirkungsvollen Schutzes zu versichern. Juwel und Avatāra haben da einiges gemeinsam. Der Laie kann den echten Diamanten unmöglich von einer Imitation unterscheiden und so blüht der Handel mit falschen Juwelen und Avatāras ganz naturgemäß. Ein Zweck dieser Arbeit ist es deshalb, hier ein wenig mehr Klarheit zu schaffen und den Versuch einer Avatāratheorie zu wagen. Diese muß beinhalten, Bedingungen anzugeben, unter welchen wir von 'Avatāra' sprechen können, wie und an welchen Zeichen Er als solcher zu erkennen ist.

Mit dem Avatāra-Gedanken ist, wie ich schon erwähnte, ein Heilsgeschehen verbunden. ''Die Avatāras haben ihre eigene Periodizität. Der Rhythmus, mit dem ihr Erscheinen verbunden ist, ist das Pendel, welches zwischen 'Gut und Böse', zwischen den Devas und den Asuras schwingt''.[9] Die letzten Avatāras zumindest kamen zum Ende eines Zeitalters, um die Menschheit in das jeweils neue zu führen.[10] Aus der Avatāra-Geschichte ergibt sich somit, daß, wenn wir an einen Avatāra glauben, wir auch an ein neues Zeitalter denken, das Er einleitet und wenn wir an ein Goldenes Zeitalter denken, wir zugleich nach einem Avatāra Ausschau halten müssen. So wird uns im Verlauf der Untersuchung auch beschäftigen, ob die Kriterien als erfüllt angesehen werden können, die das Ende unseres Zeitalters, des Kali-Yugas, beschreiben, genau der Zeitpunkt, für den der nächste Avatāra erwartet wird.

Zur Verfahrensweise der vorliegenden Untersuchung möchte ich bemerken, daß der Avatāragedanke vor allem im Hinblick auf seine *theologische Bedeutung in der Gegenwart* geprüft wird und es nicht Aufgabe dieser Arbeit sein soll, historische Entwicklungen und ihre Zusammenhänge zu erforschen.

II

Mahāpuruṣa und Avatāra

Wenn wir uns kritisch der Behauptung nähern wollen, daß Avatāras, Inkarnationen Gottes, wirklich existieren oder existiert haben, dann müssen wir imstande sein zu zeigen, welche *unübertreffliche Taten* diese vollbrachten, zu denen ein Mensch nicht fähig gewesen wäre. Zu schnell nämlich betitelt der unkundige Sucher 'übernatürliche' Kräfte als göttlich, die für den Kenner yogischer Macht
und Asketechnik als durchaus natürlich bezeichnet werden können. Um diesem häufig vorkommendem Mißverständnis zu begegnen, wollen wir im Folgenden die Möglichkeiten eines Wesens untersuchen, welches die denkbar höchste Stufe *menschlicher* Entwicklung auf Erden verkörpert, der *Mahāpuruṣa* und inwiefern dieser
sich von den Fähigkeiten eines Avatāras unterscheidet.

Die Avatāra-Theorie macht einen deutlichen Unterschied zwischen beiden Begriffen. ''Die Gita spricht zwar davon, daß die Seele zum Brahman wird (brahmabhuta) und daß sie dadurch in dem
Herrn, in Krishna wohnt. Aber sie spricht, was betont werden
muß, nicht davon, daß sie zum *Herrn*, zum Purushottama, zur
Göttlichen Gestalt als Höchster Person in Menschengestalt
werde.''[11] D.h. also: *Nach der Bhagavad-Gītā kann die individuelle Seele,
Jīva, nicht die Identität mit der höchsten Gottheit in dem Maße erlangen, daß
sie in der Lage wäre, zum Avatāra zu werden und somit den vollkommenen
Glanz der Gottheit auf diesem Erdenplan zu verwirklichen.* ''Zwar kann jeder Jiva die göttliche Geburt erlangen. Das ist aber nicht die Herabkunft der Gottheit, kein Avatartum''.[11] Hier also unterscheidet
sich die theistische Gita vom Vedantischen Monismus.

Die Frage nun nach dem Unterschied zwischen Gott und
Mensch, zwischen dem Avatāra — ''Herabstieg'' und dem Mahāpuruṣa — ''große Seele'', *zwischen dem göttlichen Glanz, der Mensch geworden und dem menschlichen Glanz, der Gott geworden scheint*, wird uns
erst das Delikate unseres Unterfangens zu Bewußtsein bringen können.[12]

R. M. Huntington fragt[13] im Bewußtsein des Avatārabegriffs:
''Kann eine qualitative Demarkationslinie gezogen werden, welche
die Einzigartigkeit des Avatārakonzepts innerhalb des vedantischen
Referenzrahmens bedeutungsreich schützen kann?'' Im Bhāgavata

Purāṇa I.3.26-27 und II.7.1-38 heißt es: ''Die Inkarnationen von Lord Viṣṇu, die Männer von sattwischen Qualitäten, sind unzählbar. Sie wachsen in die Tausende, Weise, Ṛṣis, Manus, Götter, Söhne von Manu, Teile von ihnen und die Prajāpatis, alle sind Inkarnationen Haris (Viṣṇus)''. Im Folgenden wollen wir versuchen, einen ordnenden Überblick über diese 'Unzahl' zu geben und ihre Kräfte differenziert zu beschreiben.

Im Allgemeinen werden die Möglichkeiten, welche ein Yogi, Ṛṣi, Mahāṛṣi, Brahmaṛṣi und Mahāpuruṣa[14] hat, um sich hohe Siddhi-Kräfte anzueignen, sehr unterschätzt. So erscheint es zweckmäßig, eine Unterscheidung zu treffen zwischen den niederen Siddhi-Kräften, die relativ leicht erlangt werden können und den höheren, welche schwer zu erwerben sind. Im Folgenden werden wir letztere beschreiben, die auch die 8 Hauptkräfte, aiśvaryas (asketische Majestäten) oder mahāsiddhis genannt werden.

Aṇiman — die Kraft, den eigenen Körper oder Beliebiges so klein zu machen, wie man will, sogar so winzig wie ein Atom.

Mahiman — die Kraft, den eigenen Körper oder Beliebiges so groß zu machen, wie man will.[15]

Laghiman — die Kraft, den eigenen Körper oder Beliebiges so leicht im Gewicht zu machen wie man will.

Gariman — die Kraft, den eigenen Körper oder Beliebiges so schwer zu machen wie man wünscht.

Prāpti — die Kraft, alles zu erlangen, was man wünscht.

Vaśitva — die Kraft, alles unter Kontrolle zu bringen.

Prakāmya — die Kraft, alle Wünsche zu befriedigen durch unwiderstehliche Willenskraft.

Īśitva — die Kraft, Īśa zu werden, Herr über alles.[16]

Mit dieser Aufstellung[17] können wir uns einen Eindruck vermitteln von der Reichweite der Kräfte eines hochentwickelten Yogis und den geradezu unvorstellbaren Kräften eines Mahāpuruṣa. Denn nur letzterem wird es gelingen, eine volle Beherrschung der *gesamten* genannten Macht der Kräfte zu erlangen, mit deren Hilfe er *Gebäude, Planeten, ja Universen* in Existenz zu bringen vermag.[18] Da es aber aufgrund der großen Demut und Bescheidenheit der wahren Meister äußerst selten geschieht, daß sie Gebrauch von ihren Kräften machen, ist der Laie geneigt, sie auch dem (meist eige-

nen) Meister zuzuschreiben, welcher vergleichsweise über nur sehr geringe Kräfte verfügt, die aber 'übermenschlich' genug sind, um viele in Staunen zu versetzen.

Die ganze Brisanz dieses Umstandes aber entfaltet sich erst in dem Anspruch der meisten Gurus in Indien, als göttliche Inkarnation verehrt zu werden und somit eine Identität mit sich und der denkbar höchsten Kraft des Kosmos herzustellen. Wollen wir kurz einmal die innere Situation, welche sich für den Verehrer eines Meisters ergibt, näher analysieren. Woraus entwickelt sich bei ihm der Glaube, daß der eigene Meister Gott sei?

Am Anfang steht ein *Konversionserlebnis*, welches den begeisterten Anhänger mit einer Erfahrung konfrontiert, die deutlich über die Grenzen der von ihm vorgestellten Möglichkeiten geht, welche er einem lebenden menschlichen Westen hätte zuschreiben können. Wie Gott gedacht wird, hängt also wesentlich von der Vorstellungskraft des Vorstellenden ab. Eine biederer Mensch z.B., der Zeuge der Materialisation eines Ringes wird, erlebt im 'zaubernden' Guru plötzlich den Supermann, der *zu allem* imstande zu sein scheint und *setzt diese Vorstellung gleich mit der Allmacht Gottes*. Einen anderen, der Kenntnis von solchen Siddhi-Kräften hat und schon Zeuge mehrerer Materialisationen von Seiten anderer Meister war, wird die Erfahrung des Betreffenden kaum berühren, sondern er versteht es, die beobachteten Fähigkeiten einer bestimmten Stufe yogischer Kraft zuzuschreiben, die für ihn bei weitem noch nicht göttlich ist. Einem solchen spirituellen Sucher wird der Meister in ganz anderer Weise begegnen und versuchen, jenem die eigene göttliche Größe ebenfalls so zu offenbaren, daß die entscheidende Erfahrung der Allmacht und Allwissenheit des Gurus auch für diesen Menschen die Grenzen des menschlich Denkbaren transzendiert.

Hier wird deutlich, wie die jeweilige Vorstellung von Gott eng verknüpft ist mit dem Bewußtseinszustand und der Erlebniswelt des Betreffenden. Nun variiert diese Gottesvorstellung nicht nur von Mensch zu Mensch, von Zeitalter zu Zeitalter, sondern innerhalb der Entwicklungsgeschichte eines jeden Gottessuchers verändern sich mit den wachsenden Erfahrungen auch plötzlich seine Gottesideen. Alte Bilder werden durch neue ersetzt in dem Maße, wie die Entwicklung der eigenen Psyche voranschreitet, und naturgemäß ist der Verehrer eines Guru veranlaßt, diese neuen

Gottesvorstellungen mit dem Bild, das der eigene Meister verkörpert, immer wider zu vergleichen.

Dieses Vorgehen erweckt in uns den Gedanken, daß eine solche Entwicklung nur dann möglich ist, wenn man den Glauben an den eigenen Meister nicht absolut setzt, sondern nur Gott, das eigene Selbst, als den letztgültigen Guru akzeptiert.

Meiner Erfahrung nach glauben viele Verehrer der Gurus, nachdem sie Zeuge einer Ring- oder Śiva-Lingam-Materialisierung waren, sie hätten Gott ins Auge geschaut. Den Mond in die eigene Guruhand vom Firmament wegzuzaubern[19] oder die NASA eine Photographie von Sai Baba per Satellit empfangen lassen (!)[20] und ähnliche überwältigende Wunder sind auch 'nur' Kräfte, wie ich mir auf meiner Forschungsreise von mehreren Kennern dieses Gebietes versichern ließ,[21] die von der auf der Höhe ihrer Macht stehenden Tantrikern und Yogis ebenfalls entfaltet werden können. Ein sehr wirkungsvolles Wunder, nämlich den eigenen Guru plötzlich in der Gestalt von Jesus Christus oder Kṛṣṇa etc. zu erleben, macht manchen glauben, jener sei zugleich auch identisch mit diesen. Aber auch hier handelt es sich um eine spezielle Siddhi-Kraft, die allerdings nur den großen Initiierten zur Verfügung steht, mit Hilfe derer sie *jede beliebige Gestalt* annehmen können.[22] Dabei wird oft vergessen, welches die wirklichen Wunder sind. Swami Vivekananda pflegte zu sagen: ''Ich habe das höchste Wunder, das überzeugendste Wunder gesehen. Sri Ramakrishna nahm den Geist der Menschen, verwandelte sie in sanften Ton und gab ihnen eine neue Gestalt in göttlichen Gußformen.[23]

Nun stellen sich für uns zwei Fragen:

1) Gibt es überhaupt Wunder, die unverkennbar göttlichen Charakter tragen und mit Sicherheit außerhalb yogischer Möglichkeiten liegen?

2) Worin könnte sich die Begrenztheit eines Mahāpuruṣa ausdrücken, die doch notwendigerweise irgendwie vorhanden sein muß, um die *Unbegrenztheit Gottes* noch erkennbar werden zu lassen?

ad 1: Im Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, eine Quelle wunderhafter Erzählungen, heißt es über die beispiellosen Kräfte Kṛṣṇas[24]:

''Als Kṛṣṇa in Bṛndavan manifestiert war, hielt Lord Brahmā Ihn für einen gewöhnlichen Kuhjungen und wollte Seine

Kraft prüfen. Deshalb stahl Brahmā Ihm alle Kühe, Kälber und Kuhhirten und versteckte sie kraft seiner täuschenden Energie. Als Kṛṣṇa den Diebstahl entdeckte, erschuf er sofort viele spirituelle und materielle Planeten in Gegenwart von Lord Brahmā. Im selben Moment manifestierte er Kühe, Kuhherden, Kuhhirten und Kälber sowie unzählige himmlische Planeten (Vaikuṇṭha). Die Kuhjungen wurden zu vierhändigen Nārāyaṇas, den herrschenden Gottheiten der Vaikuṇṭha-Planeten. Alle verschiedenen Brahmās von verschiedenen Universen begannen ihre Gebete Lord Kṛṣṇa darzubringen. Als nun der Lord Brahmā von diesem Universum dieses Spiel sah, war er erstaunt und von dem Wunder tief getroffen.''[25]

Ein solches Wunder, das selbst Lord Brahmā in höchstes Staunen versetzte, könnte als *exemplarisch göttlich* gelten und es scheint nicht vorstellbar, daß es entweder von einem Mahāpuruṣa oder gar einem Schwarzmagier reproduziert werden könnte. Caitanya sichert diese Behauptung der Unnachahmlichkeit ab mit der im Folgenden widergegebenen Beschreibung der göttlichen Qualitäten, wobei er differenziert, welche Gottheit über welche Kräfte verfügt.

''... Es gibt noch 5 weitere Qualitäten, welche auf den Vaikuṇṭha-Planeten, in Nārāyaṇa (der höchste Aspekt der Gottheit), dem Gatten von Lakṣmī, vorhanden sind. Diese Qualitäten sind auch gegenwärtig in Kṛṣṇa, aber sie sind nicht vorhanden in den Halbgöttern wie Lord Śiva oder in anderen lebenden Entitäten. Diese sind:

1) unbegreifbar überlegene Kraft
2) die Fähigkeit, unzählige Universen vom eigenen Körper zu erzeugen.
3) die Quelle aller Inkarnationen zu sein.
4) das Gewähren von Befreiung gegenüber getöteten Feinden.[25a]
5) die Fähigkeit, hochstehende Personen, die Zufriedenheit in sich selbst gefunden haben, anzuziehen.''[26,27]

ad 2: Auch wenn ein Mahāpuruṣa über göttliche Kräfte verfügt, so wird er sie üblicherweise nicht demonstrieren. Es ist nicht seine Rolle, Schöpfer zu spielen und so wird er sich vorsehen und im Rahmen seiner von Gott zugeteilten Aufgabe blei-

ben. Denn auch seine Kräfte sind ihm ja von Gott verliehen aufgrund seiner Reinheit und vor allem der Fähigkeit, mit ihnen in der richtigen Weise umgehen zu können. Daß diese Grenze manchmal unbefugt überschritten wurde, zeigt folgende Geschichte.

Der mächtige Maharṣi Viśvāmitra hatte einem König, der sein Verehrer war, versprochen, bei seinem Tode gen Himmel ziehen zu dürfen. Und als dies geschehen sollte und Viśvāmitra sein Versprechen einlösen wollte, da akzeptierte der Himmelsgott den König nicht. Da es Viśvāmitra trotz Verhandlungen nicht gelang, die Entscheidung der Himmlischen zu ändern, sah er sich gezwungen, ein Universum mit entsprechenden Göttern und einem Himmel darin zu erschaffen.

Auf diese Weise hatte er zwar sein Versprechen erfüllen können, aber er zog sich den Zorn der Himmlischen zu, die ihn ermahnten, er hätte in den Schöpfungsplan eingegriffen. Als Viśvāmitra sich nach der Tat jeder yogischen Kraft bar fühlte, bekannte er, daß er Unrecht getan hatte und mußte daraufhin 1000 Jahre meditieren, um dieselbe Kraft wiederzugewinnen.

Somit ist die Aufgabe, für die ein Mahāpuruṣa sich inkarniert, eine begrenzte und es ist ihm von Gott auferlegt, in ihrem Rahmen nur zu handeln.

Hier sei einmal von zwei Arten von Mahāpuruṣas die Rede. Die eine steigt zur Erde herab, weil sie noch gewisse Versprechen gegenüber ihren Schülern an diesen planetarischen Entwicklungsbereich binden. Ramakrishna z.B. sagte, er sei nur wegen Vivekananda gekommen. Meist haben diese Mahāpuruṣas noch eigene feine Unreinheiten aufzuarbeiten und indem sie den Menschen in ihrer irdischen Entwicklung helfen, bringen sie auch sich selbst ein gutes Stück weiter. Sie haben noch nicht den vollkommenen Zustand von *ananda* realisiert, der sie der irdischen Sphäre enthöbe. Oft erleben Heilige wie Caitanya oder Ramakrishna das Göttliche so konkret in sich, daß sie in diesen Augenblicken sich nur noch in ihrer göttlichen Identität erfassen, ohne jedoch den Unterschied wahrnehmen zu können, der zwischen ihrer Göttlichkeit und der eines Purna-Avatāra immer noch besteht.

''Es kann (nämlich) auch das göttliche Bewußtsein des Purushottama, des Höchsten *Herrn* selbst in das Menschsein herabkommen, und das des Jiva verschwindet. Nach einem Bericht seiner Zeitgenossen ereignete sich dies bei den gelegentlichen Transfigurationen des Chaitanya, wenn er, der in seinem normalen Bewußtsein als Mensch nur der Liebende und Ergebene des Herrn war und jede Vergöttlichung ablehnte, in diesen übernormalen Zuständen zum Herrn selbst wurde und so sprach und handelte, mit allem ausströmenden Licht und der Liebe und Macht der göttlichen Gegenwart.''[28]

Die zweite Art von Mahāpuruṣa kommt aus reiner Liebe zur Menschheit und hat keine eigenen Interessen, weshalb sie herabgestiegen wäre. Während ihrer irdischen Existenz nämlich *können sie in ihrer Entwicklung nicht weiter aufsteigen!*[29] Sie stehen somit den göttlichen Avatāras sehr nahe. Von der buddhistischen Literatur kennen wir sie als *Nirmāṇakāyas*, Adepten also, welche auf das Nirvāṇa verzichten und zur leidenden Menschheit zurückkehren, um ihr zu helfen.[30]

Beide Arten von Mahāpuruṣas haben mit den göttlichen Avatāras gemein, daß sie nicht mehr der menschlichen Geburt bedürfen, um sich weiterentwickeln zu können. Ihr Karma liegt wesentlich jenseits der irdischen Ebene. Auch wird gesagt, ein Mahāpuruṣa könne ab einer gewissen Stufe der karmischen Reinheit nicht mehr auf die Erde herabsteigen, weil er karmisch von der Erde *ent*bunden und mit dem Karma eines anderen Planeten *ver*bunden sei! J. Gonda macht uns auf einen bedeutsamen Unterschied aufmerksam: ''Man unterscheidet zwischen den primären Avatāras, d.h. Viṣṇu selbst mit seinem tranzendenten Körper, und den sekundären, d.h. den Seelen im saṃsāra, die *zwecks Erfüllung einer besonderen Mission* zu einer Behausung von Viṣṇus Macht geworden sind. Die ersteren müssen von den Erlösungsbedürftigen zum Objekt ihrer Verehrung und besonders ihrer Meditation gemacht, die letzteren von denen, die Erdengütern nachstreben, verehrt werden.''[31]

Fassen wir nun den Unterschied zwischen Avatāra und Mahāpuruṣa wie folgt. Indem der Avatāra identisch ist mit der Gottheit, verfügt er über alle Kräfte Gottes in unbegrenzter Weise in Raum und Zeit. Seine Kraft ist natürlich und spontan und wird nicht entwickelt durch sonst übliche yogische Übungen. Der Mahāpuruṣa

hingegen ist im Laufe vieler Leben aufgrund vieler Verdienste zu seinem überragenden Zustand aufgestiegen und bekam seine übernatürlichen Kräfte von Gott verliehen; er ist also nich identisch mit ihnen. Das Verfügen des Mahāpuruṣa über seine Kräfte hängt demnach wesentlich von seinem yogischen Zustand und seiner Verbinding zu Gott ab.

Diese Tatsache impliziert, daß ein Mahāpuruṣa nicht uneingeschränkt und frei mit seinen Kräften walten kann, wie dies dem Avatāra möglich ist. Jener nämlich hat sich Gott immer wieder zu verantworten, was, wenn dies nicht geschieht, zum Verlust seiner Kräfte führen kann wie im Falle Viśvāmitras. Dem Avatāra hingegen ist es möglich, Wunderkräfte auch öffentlich zu demonstrieren, ohne in Verruf zu kommen oder gar seiner Kräfte verlustig zu gehen. Freilich wird Er diese nur denen zeigen, die ''Augen haben zu sehen und Ohren zu Hören.''

Ein Mahāpuruṣa steht nie ganz jenseits der *drei guṇas*, d.h. der Relativität. Wir können dies aus der Tatsache erkennen, daß sein Körper am Ende seines Lebens Asche zurückläßt.[32] Der Avatāra hingegen steigt zum Himmel auf, ohne eine Spur Seines Körpers zu hinterlassen. ''Der Herr'', sagt das Bhāgavata Purāṇa,[33] ''ist frei von Sattwa und anderen Attributen''.[34] ''Der physische Rahmen (eines Avatāra hingegen) ist so beschaffen, daß das direkte Hervorscheinen des spezifischen Aspektes, den die Gottheit in jeder Inkarnation annimmt, *avatārarahasya*, 'Mensch-Gottheit', nicht begrenzt wird. Der Avatāra nimmt also eine Form an, die frei von vorhergehendem Karma, Vāsanās und Saṃskāras (Neigungen, Ausgangspunkten und Merkmalen der Handlung) sind.''[35]

Ein anderes, sehr wesentliches Merkmal des Unterschieds zwischen Avatāra und Mahāpuruṣa ist die Dimension ihres Aufgaben und Wirkungsbereiches. Ein Mahāpuruṣa inkarniert sich für eine bestimmte begrenzte Aufgabe, während der Avatāra eine kosmische Aufgabe übernimmt. Er erscheint als kosmisches Ereignis, das den Lauf vor allem der geistigen Geschichte der Menschheit beeinflußt. ''Während die spirituelle Hilfe, die ein Sadguru gewährt, in ihrem Spielraum beschränkt und individueller Natur ist, nur jene einbeziehend, welche direkt mit ihm verbunden sind, ist die Hilfe, welche von einem Avatāra gegeben wird, sowohl individueller wie kollektiver Natur, hüllt das ganze Universum ein und

ist ausgedehnt sogar auf jene, welche nicht persönlich mit ihm ver-
bunden sind.''[36] Der Avatāra fungiert somit als Förderer der weite-
ren Evolution der Menschheit und kann aufgrund *Seiner unbegrenzten
Kraft und Intelligenz* der menschlichen Entwicklung eine neue Rich-
tung geben. Gemäß den Aussagen der Bhagavad-Gītā steigt der
Avatāra aus drei Hauptgründen auf die Erde herab:

1) um den Dharma und das Verständnis von Rechtschaffenheit
   und Ordnung wiederzubeleben und die Phase größten Nieder-
   gangs der Rechtschaffenheit zu beenden.

2) um die vorherrschenden üblen Kräfte der betreffenden Zeit zu
   zerstören und die übelgesinnten Menschen von diesem Plane-
   ten zu entfernen.[37] Der Śaṅkaracharya von Puri wies in einem
   Gespräch mit mir dies als Hauptunterscheidungsmerkmal zwi-
   schen Avatāra und Mahāpuruṣa aus und meinte: ''*Wenn einer
   der großen Yogis unserer Zeit in der Lage ist, die dämonischen Kräfte die-
   ses Planeten zu zerstören und Rechtschaffenheit widerherzustellen, dann
   muß Er als Avatāra angesehen werden.*''[38] Bekanntlicherweise such-
   ten die Ṛṣis seinerzeit die Hilfe der Avatāras und ihrer überle-
   genen Kräfte, um die sie belästigende dämonische Macht zu
   zerstören, wozu sie selbst nicht imstande waren.[39]

3) um die Leidenden, die rechtschaffen sind, aber von der Situa-
   tion der Rechtlosigkeit bedrückt sind und dadurch selbst
   schwach zu werden beginnen, zu trösten und zu stärken, und
   viele Millionen zu befreien.

Ein Mensch wird geboren aufgrund gewisser karmischer Um-
stände. Die Notwendigkeit und der starke Wunsch zu weiterer Ent-
wicklung zwingt ihn immer wieder in das irdische Gefäß. Der Ma-
hāpuruṣa kommt zu uns, um die hohe Ebene seines Bewußtseinszu-
standes, welche er für sich erreicht hat, seinen Mitmenschen aus
früheren Existenzen zu vermitteln.

Dabei hat er Gelegenheit, neue Erfahrungen zu machen und sei-
nen Zustand geistiger Wonne zu festigen und zu erhöhen. Ein Ava-
tāra jedoch steigt auf die Erde herab, nicht aufgrund einer persönli-
chen Notwendigkeit oder karmischer Verbindung, sondern einzig
aus der Not der Zeit heraus, die Seine Herabkunft erforderlich
macht.

Analog zu der Zerstörung dämonischer Kräfte ist der Avatāra in
der Lage, *Gnade zu gewähren*, das schlechte Karma der Menschen

aufzulösen, abzumildern, Flüche aufzuheben, deren Kraft nur Er brechen kann. Nur ein Avatāra kann *unbegrenzt* Karma übernehmen. Es heißt, selbst Seine Feinde, indem sie gegen Ihn zu kämpfen das Glück haben, erlangen Befreiung.[40] Schließlich jedoch kann *nur ein Avatāra ewige Befreiung und Frieden gewähren*, während ein Mahāpuruṣa seinen Schülern nur Einlaß in die himmlischen Sphären (Vaikuṇṭha, Brahmāloka) geben kann.[41] Denn nur der Avatāra kann die göttliche Reinheit in Seiner Lehre und als Person repräsentieren, die den Adepten im Urgrund des Seins verankert. Den Mahāpuruṣa und seine Lehre muß man zu gegebener Zeit transzendieren, um sich unmittelbar mit der Göttlichkeit zu verbinden[42]. ''Ein Avatāra kann bei der Entwicklung eines Suchers gezielter vorgehen und dadurch Prozesse beschleunigen. Der Avatāra ist der Weg, der Guru weist *einen* Weg, nämlich seinen eigenen. Der Avatāra kann viele Wege führen.''[43] Noch kritischer zum Wirken der Mahāpuruṣas äußert sich ein anderer: Da die Mahāpuruṣas ein wenig vom menschlichen Element und somit eine Art von Wunsch oder Verlangen in sich tragen, kann es vorkommen, daß aufgrund ihres Restes von Unwissenheit und übermäßiger Gefühle in den Familien (ihrer Anhänger) Gegensätze und Disharmonien beobachtet werden können(!)[44]

Und schließlich erzeugt der Avatāra eine übermenschliche Anziehungskraft,[45] die seine Verehrer in eine Ekstase versetzt. ''Parīkṣit Mahārāja fragte einmal Śukadeva Gosvāmī warum Kṛṣṇa so geliebt wurde von den Einwohnern von Bṛndāvana, der Stadt von Kṛṣṇas Kindheit, welche Ihn sogar mehr liebten, als ihre eigenen Kinder. Er antwortete, die Seele (ātmā) eines jeden ist speziell *den* lebenden Wesen sehr lieb und teuer, die einen materiellen Körper angenommen haben. Dieser Ātmā, die spirituelle Seele nämlich, ist ein Teil von Kṛṣṇa. Aus diesem Grunde ist uns Kṛṣṇa sehr lieb ...''[46]

Diese Anziehungskraft des Avatāras nahm sich in Anbetracht auch Seiner berückenden Schönheit als etwas ganz Natürliches aus. ''Hatte doch Kṛṣṇa, um die Stärke seiner spirituellen Macht darzustellen, eine für Seine Spiele in der materiellen Welt passende Gestalt angenommen. Diese Gestalt war wundervoll sogar für Ihn und war der höchste Sitz von Reichtum und Glück. Seine Gliedmaßen waren so berückend, daß sie die Schönheit des Schmuckes, den Er an verschiedenen Stellen des Körpers trug, erhöhte.''[47]

An anderer Stelle wird immer wieder von den 6 Reichtümern ge-
sprochen, über die eine Inkarnation Gottes verfügen muß:

Reichtum, Stärke, Wissen, Schönheit, Ruhm, Entsagung. Die
Vischnuitische Pāñcarātra Religion stellt dagegen andere Aspekte
Gottes bei der Aufzählung seiner Attribute besonders in den Vor-
dergrund:

1) Jñāna — Allwissenheit.
    (die anderen 5 Eigenschaften werden als Attribute oder Kanäle
    von jñāna bezeichnet[48]).
2) Aiśvarya — Aktivität, die auf Unabhängigkeit basiert, unbe-
    hinderte Tätigkeit.
3) Śakti — Fähigkeit, die Ursache für die materielle Welt zu wer-
    den.
4) Bala — Abwesenheit von Müdigkeit in Verbindung mit der Er-
    schaffung und Aufrechterhaltung der Welt.
5) Vīrya — Fähigkeit, unbeeinflußt und unverändert zu bleiben
    trotz der Tatsache, die Ursache für die materielle Welt zu sein.
6) Tejas — strahlende, selbstgenügsam erobernde Macht.[49]

In der eben genannten Aufzählung wird die allwissende Überle-
genheit Gottes, Seine gänzlich unabhängige Kraft, die Er ständig
entfaltet, und die so unerschöpflich ist, daß sie Ihn weder ermüdet,
noch einer Veränderung unterwirft, beschrieben. Ich halte diese
Deutung der Göttlichen Kraft für eine der treffendsten, die mir bis-
her begegnet ist.

Nach der Philosophie von Rāmānuja verfügt der Avatāra und
Sein Körper (Paravāsudeva) ebenfalls über 6 Hauptqualitäten, die
in Ihm vollkommen manifestiert sind:

Intelligenz, Stärke, Überlegenheit, Beständigkeit, Macht,
energischer Widerstand und ihre Verzweigungen.

Die anderen unzähligen Qualitäten Gottes sind innerhalb dieser
Qualitäten enthalten gerade so wie der Kosmos im *Herrn*. Die ge-
nannten Qualitäten werden ausgeübt

1) zu dem Zweck, alle Dinge in all ihren Aspekten direkt und je-
    der Zeit wahrnehmen zu können,
2) um alle Dinge, welche auf diese Weise wahrgenommen wer-
    den, zu unterstützen,
3) um die unterstützten Dinge kontrollieren zu können,
4) um mit Leichtigkeit und ohne irgendeine Ermüdung oder An-
    strengung unterstützen und kontrollieren zu können,[50]

5) um außerordentliche Dinge zu bewirken, die unvergleichlich
   sind und jenseits unseres Verständnisvermögens liegen,

6) um alle diese Dinge ohne Widerstand und ohne irgendeine Hil-
   fe oder ein Instrument ausführen und alles andere überwälti-
   gen zu können.[51]

III

Avatāra-Stufen

Im Folgenden werden wir den Begriff *Avatāra* einer weiteren Klä-
rung unterziehen, indem wir die verschiedenen Avatāra-Grade vor
unserem Auge Revue passieren lassen.

1. *Puruṣa-Avatāras.* Sie sind keine menschlichen Avatāras und ver-
   körpern sich in den himmlischen Sphären in *Karanodakaśāyī Viṣ-
   ṇu* (Mahā-Viṣṇu, Mahā-Vaikuṇṭhanatha), der identisch ist mit
   der höchsten Person der Gottheit; in *Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu* (Nā-
   rāyaṇa, Hiraṇyagarbha, Antaryāmī),[52] die zweithöchste Per-
   son der Gottheit repräsentierend und auf der Schlange Śeṣa lie-
   gend;
   in *Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu*, die dritthöchste Person der Gottheit, auf
   einem Ozean von Milch liegend;[53]

2. *Guṇa-Avatāras.* Sie stehen eine Stufe unter der erstgenannten
   Kategorie, sind ebenfalls keine menschlichen Avatāras und
   sind verkörpert in *Lord Brahmā*, dem Schöpfer;
   in *Lord Śiva*, dem Zerstörer und Erneuerer;
   in *Lord Viṣṇu*, dem Erhalter (identisch mit Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣ-
   ṇu).
   Sie repräsentieren und beherrschen die materielle Ebene und
   sind in unserem Universum gegenwärtig.[54]

3. *Līlā-Avatāras.* Sie sind *die eigentlichen göttlichen Avatāras in tierhafter
   und menschlicher Gestalt, die auf die Erde herabsteigen,* um ihre kos-
   mischen Aufgaben zu erfüllen.[55] Im Gegensatz zu allen ande-
   ren Avatāras sind sie als einzige *identisch mit der Gottheit.* Unter
   den Līla-Avatāras gibt es zwei Klassen mit verschiedenen Gra-
   den an Kräften:
   a) der *Aṃśa-Avatāra,* der nur zu einem überwiegenden Teil in
      Besitz der Kraft und des Glanzes der Gottheit ist — wie
      Rāma, der Seine Kraft mit Seinen drei Brüdern teilte

b) der *Purna-Avatāra*, der über die *gesamte* Kraft Gottes in Sich
    als einer Person verfügt — wie Kṛṣṇa.

4. *Manvantara-Avatāras*. Die Avatāras des Manu, die zu den
    Aveṣa-Avatāras gezählt werden.[56,57]

5. *Yuga-Avatāras*. Sie sind identisch mit den Līlā-Avatāras und
    sind
    a) weiß im Satya-Yuga.
    b) rot im Tretā-Yuga.
    c) dunkelblau im Dvāpara-Yuga.
    d) schwarz oder gelb im Kali-Yuga.[58]

6. *Saktyāveśa-Avatāras*. Unter diesen gibt es zwei Klassen:
    a) die *direkt* mit der Macht der Gottheit Versehenen. Diese
        sind die göttlichen Avatāras (sakasat) und identisch mit
        den Līlā-Avatāras.
    b) die *indirekt* mit der Macht der Gottheit Versehenen. Sie
        werden auch *Vibhūti-Avatāras* oder *Aveṣa-Avatāras* genannt.
        ''Wenn immer der Herr gegenwärtig ist in jemand in Tei-
        len Seiner verschiedenen Kräfte, dann repräsentiert die le-
        bende Entität den Herrn und wird Śaktyāveśa-Avatāra ge-
        nannt, d.h. eine Inkarnation, die mit gezielten Kräften
        ausgestattet ist.''[59,60]

D.h. also ein Līlā-Avatāra kann in der Form und Funktion eines
Manvantara-, eines Yuga- oder eines Śaktyāveśa-Avatāra erschei-
nen.

Zur näheren Erläuterung der so wichtigen Unterscheidung zwi-
schen Avatāras und Vibhūtis, zwischen *menschlichem Gott* und *göttli-
chem Mensch* einige Worte Aurobindos:

''Ein Avatar, grob gesprochen, ist jemand, welcher der Gegenwart
und Kraft des Göttlichen, geboren in Ihm oder herabgestiegen in
Ihm, bewußt ist und von innen heraus Seinen Willen, Sein Leben
und Seine Handlung regiert. Er fühlt Sich innerlich identifiziert mit
dieser göttlichen Kraft und Gegenwart.

Ein Vibhūti *verkörpert etwas* von der Kraft des Göttlichen und ist
befähigt durch sie, mit großer Macht in der Welt zu handeln... Die
Kraft mag zwar groß sein, aber sein Bewußtsein ist nicht das einer
eingeborenen oder innewohnenden Göttlichkeit''.[61]

Wie sind nun die bedeutendsten Begründer verschiedener spiri-
tueller Bewegungen oder Religionen einzuschätzen? Aurobindo
wiederum:

''*Caitanya* wird von den Vischnuiten für einen Avatāra gehalten. Doch er war sich nur dann der dahinterstehenden Gottheit bewußt, wenn die Gottheit vor ihn trat und in seltenen Gelegenheiten von ihm Besitz ergriff. *Christus* sagte 'Ich und der Vater sind eins', aber dennoch sprach und handelte er immer so, als ob eine Differenz bestünde. *Ramakrishnas* frühe Periode war die eines Gottessuchers, seiner Identität nicht von Anbeginn gewahr.''[62] ''Die göttliche Qualität ist nicht ausreichend. *Es muß das innere Bewußtsein des Herrn gegeben sein* und das Selbst, welches die menschliche Natur regiert durch Seine göttliche Gegenwart. Das Erhöhen der Kraft der Qualitäten, *Bhūtagrāma*, ist ein Aufstieg in der gewöhnlichen Manifestation. Im Falle eines Avatāra liegt eine spezielle Manifestation vor; die göttliche Geburt von oben herab, die ewige und universale Gottheit steigt herab in die Form einer individuellen Menschheit, *Ātmānaṃ Sṛjāmi*, und ist Sich Ihrer Selbst bewußt nicht nur hinter dem Schleier, sondern auch in der äußeren Natur.''[63]

Inwiefern sich dieses Bewußtsein von der eigenen Göttlichkeit im Falle des Avatāra äußert, sehen wir an den ungewöhnlichen Umständen, die sich bei der Geburt eines Avatāra ereignen. Von Kṛṣṇa wird berichtet, Er sei Seinen Eltern außerhalb des Mutterleibes als vierhändiger Viṣṇu erschienen.[64,65] Daraufhin beteten Devakī (Seine Mutter) und Vāsudeva (Sein Vater) zu Ihm und baten Ihn, Seine zwei-händige Form anzunehmen. Mit dieser Geste, die auch von Rāma und Buddha berichtet wird,[65] gibt das geborene göttliche Wesen mit unzweifelhafter Deutlichkeit zu erkennen, daß schon *von Anbeginn Seines Lebens Sein göttliches Bewußtsein bestand und es somit für Ihn nie ein Werden gab.*

Neben den ungewöhnlichen Geburtsumständen gelten vor allem auch die Wunder, die Kṛṣṇa im Babyalter tat, als wichtige Pfeiler der Avatāradoktrin wie z.B. der Biß Klein-Kṛṣṇas in die Brüste der dämonischen *Putanā*, die ihn mit ihrer Milch vergiften wollte und der ihrerseits der Tod widerfuhr, indem Krsna so heftig an ihren Brüsten sog, daß Er ihr das Leben aussaugte.[66]

Im Zeitalter der Unwissenheit (Kali-Yuga) besteht sowohl für den Guru als auch für seinen Anhänger die Gefahr, das eigene Wissen bzw. die Kraft und Entwicklungsstufe eines Gurus falsch einzuschätzen. ''Jede beliebige Persönlichkeit mit einigen wenigen Zügen mystischer Kraft wird ein Meisterstück der Gaukelei zur Schau

stellen und durch allgemeine Zustimmung zu einer Inkarnation der Gottheit erklärt.'' Um dies zu verhindern, vergegenwärtigt sich der ernsthafte Sucher die Aussagen der vedischen Schriften sowie die Lebensbeschreibungen der vergangenen Avatāras und vergleicht sie mit den Leistungen und Wunderkräften des Gurus, welcher von sich als identisch mit Gott seiend reden macht.[67]

Sowohl bei Caitanya als auch bei Ramakrishna wurde der Versuch *von seiten ihrer Anhänger* gemacht, nachzuweisen, daß jeder von ihnen der Avatāra dieses Zeitalters sei. So sah die Bhairavi Brahmani, die Entdeckerin der außergewöhnlichen Natur Ramakrishnas, alle 19 erforderlichen spirituellen Gemütshaltungen in ihm manifestiert.[68] Auch das Caitanya Caritāmṛta enthält eine Abhandlung Kaviraj Gosvāmīs, in der er versucht nachzuweisen, daß Caitanya den 32 Körperzeichen eines Avatāra Genüge leistet und folglich als Avatāra dieses Kali-Yugas zu betrachten sei.

Es liegt in der Natur der Sache, daß diese Versuche eher als devotionale Akte zu werten sind denn als ernstzunehmender Nachweis, welcher die religiöse Ekstase und Bewunderung der damaligen Verehrer für ihren Guru hätte überdauern können. Den großartigen Status der Heiligkeit und Verkörperung des Göttlichen in Ramakrishna und Caitanya anzuerkennen und zu verehren ist eine Sache, die Wahrheit über das Wesen des Avatartums zu erfassen versuchen jedoch eine andere!

IV

Die Entwicklung der Avatāra-Theorie

Die Avatāra-Idee ist historisch gesehen vergleichsweise jung und entwickelte sich erst nach der Reinkarnationslehre.[69] Lange nach Kṛṣṇas Tod erst begann sich dieser Gedanke des Herabstiegs Gottes herauszuschälen und zu einer wohldurchdachten Theorie zu formen, die andere göttliche Gestalten wie Rāma etc. mit einschloß. ''Das Vishnu-Avatar-Konzept repräsentiert den Synkretismus von drei Gottesideen, *Vira* oder der Helden-Gott Vasudeva-Krishna; die vedische Sonnengottheit Vishnu; und der kosmische Gott Narayana Brahmanas.''[70] Die einzigen Schriften, welche vom Avatāra reden, sind die Bhāgavat-Gītā und die Purāṇas.[71] In der frühen Zeit war die Zählweise der Avatāras auf 22 angelegt gemäß

dem Bhāgavata Purāṇa:[72] Um die Zeit der späteren Purāṇas (z.B. des *Varāha* und des *Agni*) wurde eine gemeinsame Anstrengung zu einer Kanonisierung der 10 Avatāras unternommen,[73] in deren Reihe man Buddha wiederum mit aufnahm obwohl er doch das *adharma* lehrte. So heißt es im Bhāgavata Purāṇa:[74] ''Wenn die Dämonen von vedischen Riten Kenntnis erhalten und beginnen, die Menschen zu unterdrücken, dann wird Viṣṇu eine anziehende, irreführende Form annehmen und sie *adharma* lehren.''[75]

Indem die Autoren dieses Teils des Bhāgavatams der politisch-religiösen Bedeutung Buddhas Rechnung tragen wollten, vergaßen sie aber, daß der essentiell negativ gedachte Charakter Buddhas sich nicht mit der Avatāra-Idee insgesamt vertrug und diese in Frage stellte. Die Gottheit sollte doch in ihrer Güte herabsteigen, die Menschen *dharma* zu lehren und nicht um ihr als Verführer entgegenzutreten.[76,77]

So empfiehlt es sich, dem Modell der 10 Avatāras, das ohnehin eher auf eine allgemeine Verbreitung des Avatārakonzeptes abzielte denn auf eine tiefere Reflexion oder Ausarbeitung desselben, keine weitere Bedeutung beizumessen und das der 22 Avatāras vorzuziehen, in dem allerdings wiederum Ṛṣis und menschliche Avatāras mitaufgenommen sind, die nicht identisch waren mit der Gottheit. Hier bleibt also noch eine klärende Weiterentwicklung des Avatāra-Gedankens zu erhoffen, die auch einem kritischen Bewußtsein standhält.

Die hinduistische Avatāra-Theorie ist, wenn auch unter anderen Namen und Nuancen von nicht wenigen Religionen als tragender Gedanke aufgenommen worden. Umstände und Bedingung für diese Herabkunft oder Fleischwerdung des Göttlichen ähneln sich dabei auffallend — ein Archetypus des Religiösen. So spricht der Jainismus von den *Tīrthaṅkaras* (= Furtbereiter), deren letzter Mahāvīra gewesen sein soll. ''Diese *Furtbereiter* stehen über dem kosmischen Geschehen ... Sie sind transzendent, tatenlos und in ungestörtem Frieden.''[78]

Im Buddhismus steigt der Buddha zu gewissen Zeiten als *Mahāpuruṣa*, *Bodhisattwa* (= dessen Innerstes Erleuchtung ist) oder als *Tathāgatā* (= der zur Wahrheit gelangt ist) herab.

Die 22 Avatāras des Hinduismus können zahlenmäßig mit geringer Differenz mit den 24 Tīrthaṅkaras und den 25 Bodhisattwas[79]

verglichen werden. Doch verstehen der Jainismus und der Bud-
dhismus ihre Heilsbringer als Weise, 'Übermenschliche', Erleuch-
tete und nicht im theistischen Schema einer kontinuierlichen Er-
scheinung der Gottheit auf Erden, wie dies im Hinduismus ange-
nommen wird.[80] So nehmen jene auch nicht die Aufgaben wahr,
die ich versuchte, als typisches Charakteristikum der Avatāras her-
auszuarbeiten, nämlich vorherrschende Übel der Zeit, in der sie er-
scheinen, zu vernichten. Als weiterer bedeutender Unterschied ist
zu bemerken, daß zwischen den Bodhisattwas sowie den
Tīrthaṅkaras keine personale Identität besteht, im Gegensatz zu
den Avatāras, die immer als Verkörperungen Viṣṇus in Erschei-
nung treten.[81]

Die Schivaiten haben dem Wort nach auch Avatāras, aber diese
nehmen nur die Form göttlicher Gestalten an und steigen nicht als
Menschen auf die Erde herab. Korrekterweise sollte man sie des-
halb *Swarūpas* (= Formen Gottes) nennen.[82] Das Linga-Purāṇa be-
schreibt 28 Avatāras Śivas und das Kurma-Purāṇa (I. 53) zählt de-
ren 26.[83] Doch scheinen die Erzählungen von Śivas Avatāras nie so
allgemein Anerkennung gefunden zu haben wie diejenigen
Viṣṇus.[84] So vermutet man, daß die schivaitische Avatāra-Lehre
''nur eine Nachbildung der vischnuitischen sei, wie sie die Rivalität
der beiden Religionen noch öfters hervorgebracht hat.''[85]
Inkarnationen von Brahmā sind gemäß der vedischen und purani-
schen Schriften nicht bekannt.[86]

Im Christentum nun hat der Gedanke der *Wiederkunft des Herrn*
eine ähnlich eminente Bedeutung wie im Vischnuismus, nicht zu-
letzt, weil auch hier die Idee der Identität mit der höchsten Gottheit
und Ihr Interesse an der Weiterentwicklung der Menschheit gege-
ben war. Vor allem die esoterischen Neuoffenbarungen zeugen von
dieser in der letzten Zeit stärker in den Vordergrund getretenen
Endzeit-orientierten Wiederkunft.[87]

Unter den philosophischen Schulen hat außer dem Dvaita-
Vedānta keine die Avatāra-Idee aufgegriffen oder hielt sie für wich-
tig. Śaṅkara als bedeutendster Vertreter des Advaita-Vedānta ak-
zeptierte zwar die Avatāra-Theorie und glaubte, daß Kṛṣṇa der
Herr (Īśvara) wäre, aber in seinem philosophischen System bekom-
men Sie auch nur den Platz zugewiesen, der allem Manifesten in

der Schöpfung gebührt: den einer Scheinexistenz, des *Māyā*-haften, Vergänglichen.[88]

Die Lebenshaltung der Avatāras und Ihre Lehren waren, indem Sie Selbst von hohen Positionen in der Welt wirkten[89] und Sie umformten, *lebensbejahend*. Somit bildeten Sie einen Kontrast zu den meisten herkömmlichen Lehren der Askese, die von der Freudlosigkeit der sinnlichen Existenz der Menschen ausgingen. Gerade die Vischnuiten waren diejenigen unter den religiösen Strömungen, welche, ähnlich der christlichen Deutung, das Erdendasein positiv interpretierten und es als glorifizierenden Akt zur Preisung der Herrlichkeit Gottes ansahen. Da die Herabkunft Gottes nun den *Gipfelpunkt eines Schöpfungszyklus* darstellt, indem das Göttliche Sich im irdischen Gewand offenbart und somit uns eine Vorstellung vermittelt von dem Ziel der Schöpfung im Allgemeinen und *unseren Möglichkeiten der Vergöttlichung unserer Existenz* im Besonderen, haben die Vischnuiten die zentrale Bedeutung des Avatāra zum Kernstück ihrer religiösen Praxis wie reflektierenden Philosophie gemacht.

Wie zuvor schon dargelegt spricht viel für die Vermutung, daß der Avatāra-Gedanke im indischen Kulturbereich seinen Ausgang von der Vischnuitischen Religion nahm[90] und die erwähnten Religionen diesen populär gewordenen Gedanken aufgriffen und in ihr System integrierten.[91] Aus dieser Überlegung heraus schien es mir gerechtfertigt, die Avatāra-Thematik aus der Perspektive der Vischnuitischen Religion darzustellen.

Gemäß den Purāṇas kommen die Avatāras von Viṣṇu und sind somit vor allem mit der sattvischen (gütigen) Ebene des Seins identifiziert, obwohl Ihr erneuernder Auftrag (tamas) ebenfalls einen straken Śiva-Aspekt enthält. So heißt es im Bhāgavata-Purāṇa I.3.28: ''In jedem Zeitalter beschützt Er (die Gottheit, der Avatāra) die Welt mit Hilfe Seiner verschiedenen Formen, wenn immer die Welt gestört ist von den Feinden Indras.''

V

Die Stellung des Avatāra im Kosmos

Wenn wir nun die Stellung des Avatāra im *Kosmos* verstehen wollen, dann sind wir zunächst zwei widerstreitenden Positionen aus-

gesetzt. Die eine, von christlich-esoterischer und theosophischer Seite meist geäußert, vertritt den Standpunkt, der Avatāra sei lediglich ein hochentwickeltes Wesen, welches, wie wir, sich von der niedersten Schöpfungsebene langsam zu seinem gegenwärtigen Status aufgeschwungen hat und nun zu uns kommt, um die Erde in ihrer weiteren Evolution zu fördern. Dieser Avatāra handelt, laut Vorstellung von Annie Besant, nach den Weisungen der Herren der 7 Planeten, die wiederum dem Herrn unseres Sonnensystems unterstellt sind. Diese werden von den Herren der Galaxien und schließlich dem Herrscher dieses Universums zur Rechenschaft gezogen.[92] Demnach scheint der Avatāra zwar für uns ein wichtiger Heilsbote zu sein, gemessen aber an der Unendlichkeit der kosmischen Hierarchie nur ein Rad im Uhrwerk Gottes[93],[94],[95]. Von solchen Tatsachen ausgehend könnte der hinduistische Anspruch, den Avatāra als weltbewegendes Ereignis anzusehen, nur mit der *Seltenheit* des Geschehens begründet werden, nicht aber durch die Stellung des Avatāra im Kosmos.

In eminentem Kontrast zu dieser aufklärerisch anmutenden Theorie steht die traditionelle indische Vorstellung, die nicht nur *geozentrisch* konzipiert ist, wie dies etwa im christlichen Glauben des Mittelalters der Fall war, sondern ausgesprochen 'Indien-bezogen' gedacht wurde. Nur in Indien finden sich die verschiedenen Yugas, die erst die Erlösung aus dem Kreislauf der Geburten ermöglicht.[96] Und gemäß der Vorstellung des Viṣṇu-Purāṇas (II,1) wurde *Bharata* als Herr der Erde eingesetzt nach ihm wurde dann auch Indien benannt. Indien war somit zum Ort des entscheidenden Geschehens geworden und nur hier steigen auch die Avatāras zur Erde herab.[97]

Nun stellt sich die Frage, mit welchen Bildern und Vorstellungen die Vischnuiten die zentrale Bedeutung des Avatāra darstellen. Was spricht — systemimmanent gedacht — für die Meinung der Vischnuiten, die den Avatāra mit dem Höchsten von Höchsten identifiziert[98] und dadurch erreichen, daß die Lehren der Avatāras nicht nur als eine von vielen Wahrheiten betrachtet werden, sondern als die schlechthin höchste für den bestimmten Zeitraum (Yuga)? Auf S. 95 ad 1 zitierte ich schon ein besonderes Wunder Kṛṣṇas, indem Er von Brahmā, keinem geringeren als dem Schöpfer der Universums, versucht wurde und zeigen konnte, wieviel un-

endlich größer Kṛṣṇas Kraft ist gegenüber der von Brahmā. In einer anderen Erscheinung Kṛṣṇas, die ich im Folgenden wiedergebe, akzeptiert Brahmā ihn zwar als Herrn und Gebieter, weiß aber noch nichts von der unvorstellbaren Macht Kṛṣṇas und der eigenen geringen Bedeutung im Vergleich zu der von Kṛṣṇa:

Zunächst begibt sich Lord Brahmā wegen einer Frage zu Kṛṣṇa und läßt sich bei Seinem Torhüter ansagen. Kṛṣṇa aber fragt denselben, *welcher* Brahmā sich denn angesagt hätte und der Torhüter gibt die Frage an Brahmā weiter. Dieser versteht den Sinn der Frage nicht und stürmt an diesem vorbei zu Kṛṣṇa, um bei Ihm ob der Bedeutung dieses Empfangs nachzuforschen:

Brahmā: "Warum ließest *Du* nachforschen, welcher Brahmā gekommen war, um Dich zu sehen? Gibt es da noch irgendeinen anderen Brahmā neben mir innerhalb dieses Universums?"

Während Kṛṣṇa dies vernahm, lächelte Er und begab sich sofort in Meditation. Unzählige Brahmās kamen im Nu an. Diese Brahmās hatten eine verschiedene Anzahl von Köpfen. Einige hatten 10, einige 20, einige 100 Köpfe, einige 1000, einige 10.000, einige 100.000, einige 1 Million und andere 10 Millionen. Niemand kann die Anzahl der Gesichter zählen, die sie hatten.

Als der vierköpfige Brahmā dieses Universums[99] all diesen Reichtum Kṛṣṇas sah, war er sehr verwundert und betrachtete sich selbst als ein Kaninchen unter vielen Elephanten. *Niemand kann die unbegreifbare Macht von Kṛṣṇa einschätzen.* Alle Brahmās, die anwesend waren, ruhten in dem einen Körper von Kṛṣṇa. Gemäß der Größe des Universums hatte der Brahmā entsprechend viele Köpfe an seinem Körper. "In dieser Weise", so wandte sich Kṛṣṇa an Seinen Fragesteller, "sorge ich für unzählige Universen."[100]

Dieses Wunder zumindest bedeutet uns, daß die Ṛṣis, welche das Bhāgavata Purāṇa verfaßt haben und von denen man annimmt, daß sie aufgrund von Visionen Zeuge dieser Begebenheiten waren, dem Avatāra die höchste Stellung in der Schöpfung überhaupt zugestehen, ja das ganze Weltgeschehen mit Seiner Kraft und Seinem Willen identifizieren. Hier noch ein Gebet aus der Brahmā-Saṃhitā, 5.40:

"Ich bete zu Govinda (ein Name Kṛṣṇas), dem allerhöchsten Herrn, der mit großer Kraft ausgestattet ist. Der strahlende

Glanz Seiner transzendentalen Form ist das unpersönliche
Brahman, das absolut, vollständig und unbegrenzt ist und wel-
ches die Verschiedenheiten von unzähligen Planeten mit ihren
außergewöhnlichen Reichtümern in Millionen von Universen
widerspiegelt.''

Da die Herabkunft eines Avatāra etwas so Außergewöhnliches
und Gnadenreiches verkörpert und für den spirituellen Sucher ein
so wichtiges Ereignis darstellt, kommt man zu derselben Frage, die
Sanātana Gosvāmī, ehemaliger Minister und Schüler von Caita-
nya, an denselben stellte:

VI

Wie können wir erkennen, wer der Avatāra dieses Zeitalters ist?

''Ich bin ein sehr unwichtiges lebendes Wesen. Ich bin sehr nie-
drig und folgte einer schlechten Lebensführung. Wie kann ich ver-
stehen, wer die Inkarnation für das Kali-Zeitalter ist?'' fragt Sanā-
tana Gosvāmī. In meinem Gespräch mit dem Śaṅkaracharya über
diese Frage betonte dieser, ''es sei sehr schwierig, den Avatāra zu
Lebzeiten zu erkennen. Er lebt schließlich in vieler Hinsicht wie ein
normaler Mensch. *Nur an der Größe seiner Taten können einige wenige
Ihn erkennen.*'' Caitanya antwortet Sanātana G.:
''In anderen Zeitaltern wurde eine Inkarnation akzeptiert gemäß
den Bestimmungen der Śāstras. Ebenso sollte auch im Kali-Yuga
eine Inkarnation in der gleichen Weise akzeptiert werden ... Der
große Weise Vyāsadeva, alles wissend, hat schon die Charakteristi-
ka der Avatāras in den Śāstras niedergelegt.''[101]
Wir nehmen hiermit die Diskussion, welcher wir bis zu Kapitel
III folgten, wieder auf und lenken sie nunmehr in eine Richtung,
aus welcher wir einen Standpunkt gewinnen wollen, um die Krite-
rien für einen Avatāra zu fassen versuchen.
Beginnen wir zunächst mit Kṛṣṇas Beschreibung der Qualitäten,
welche ein Aṁśa-Avatāra, also eine Teil-Manifestation[102] der Gott-
heit, besitzen muß.

''Wo immer Majestät, Überfluß, Berühmtheit, Autorität, Be-
scheidenheit, Freigebigkeit oder Schönheit, Glück, Fähigkeit,

Nachsicht und präzises Wissen von der Wahrheit sich findet, da existiert Meine Teil-Manifestation.''[103]

Majestät und Würde, Autorität aufgrund profunder Kenntnis der vedischen Schriften sowie der Wahrheit, ungewöhnliche Fähigkeiten geistiger wie körperlicher Art, schicksalhafte Begünstigung, Güte und Demut zeichneten von jeher auch die Purna-Avatāras aus. In der Literatur über Avatāras stieß ich auf Beschreibungen Ihrer Eigenschaften und Tugenden, die an die oben zitierten Qualitäten anknüpfen.

1) *Demut und Bescheidenheit*

Caitanya sagt: ''Eine wirkliche Inkarnation Gottes sagt niemals 'Ich bin Gott' oder 'Ich bin eine Inkarnation Gottes'''![104] Von Rāma ist bekannt, daß Er Seinen Verehrern, die voll Ehrfurcht ausriefen: ''Du bist Nārāyaṇa, der Höchste'', antwortete: ''Ich betrachte mich selbst als Mensch.'' Zeit Seines Lebens hat Er immer wieder Seine Göttlichkeit abgestritten und wollte Seinen Untertanen immer nur ein idealer König, Seiner Gemahlin ein idealer Gatte etc. sein. In Seiner Inkarnation als Kṛṣṇa, als die Kuhhirten, die sich wunderten, wer Er wäre, Ihn betrachteten, wie Er als Junge den Govardhana Hügel mit einem Finger hochhielt, um die Kühe und ihre Herden vor den zerstörenden Wolken des eifersüchtigen Indra zu schützen, rief Er aus: ''Ich bin geboren als Euer Verwandter.''[105]

Aurobindo dazu: ''Warum sollte ein Avatara Sich Selbst ausrufen, ausgenommen zu seltenen Gelegenheiten gegenüber einem Arjuna oder einigen wenigen Bhaktas oder Schülern? Es ist Sache der anderen herauszufinden, was Er ist; obwohl Er nicht leugnet, wenn andere von Ihm als *Das* sprechen, so wird Er es nicht immer sagen und vielleicht wird Er es nie sagen oder nur in Momenten wie dem der Gita: 'Ich bin *Er*.'[106]

''Der Avatāra ist frei vom Gefühl des Stolzes, daß Er Gott ist. Er ist sogar ohne Selbstgefälligkeit, daß Er frei ist von Korruption, Stolz und Ruhmsucht. Er ist Gott für Seine Anhänger, aber nicht für jene, welche Ihn nicht kennen. Es sind die anderen, die Ihn Avatāra nennen. Als Rāma durch den Wald ging, da nannten nur

12 Weise Ihn einen Avatāra. Andere sagten: Wir glauben an ein
alldurchdringendes Wesen und wir wissen, daß Du ein einfacher
Mensch bist. Rāma lächelte und ging von dannen.''[107]
Diese Zitate lassen uns zunächst einmal die Position einnehmen, al-
len denen Gurus und Yogis, die von sich behaupten, sie seien Gott
oder der Avatāra, die Avatarschaft umso sicherer abzusprechen.
Allein, wo eine Regel ist, da ist auch meist eine Ausnahme zu ihr.
Oft nämlich kann in einer rein äußerlichen Bescheidenheit mehr
Hoffahrt enthalten sein, als in einer Aussage, welche die 'wahren
Verhältnisse' in Bezug auf den Entwicklungsstand eines Meisters
widerspiegelt. Der Kreuzestod Jesu Christi war nämlich letztlich
verursacht durch Christi Behauptung, er sei der Sohn Gottes, was
die Juden, die damals wie heute in einem starr fixierten dualen
Welt- und Gottesbild, hier der allmächtige Gott und dort der
machtlose, elende Knecht (der Mensch), verhaftet waren und sind,
wie der Gipfel einer Gotteslästerung vorgekommen sein muß.
Wenn wir nun aber bedenken, daß die christliche Botschaft ohne
diese Behauptung gar nicht denkbar gewesen wäre und indem sie in
dieser Weise wirkte, eine Brücke schlug über die Kluft zwischen
Gott und Mensch und den Menschen den Gedanken der eigenen
innewohnenden Göttlichkeit einpflanzte, dann kann mit der Be-
hauptung, Gott zu sein, nicht immer und notwendigerweise Hoch-
mut und falsche Selbsteinschätzung verbunden sein!
    Eine interessante Mittelposition nimmt der 'Avatāra' Meher
Baba ein, der über sich Folgendes sagte:
    ''Wenn ich sage, 'Ich bin der Avatar', dann fühlen sich einige
glücklich, einige sind schockiert und viele, die meine Behauptung
hören, würden mich für einen Heuchler, Betrüger, einen höchsten
Egoisten oder gerade für einen Verrückten halten. Wenn ich sagte,
jeder von uns ist ein Avatar, würden einige amüsiert sein und viele
würden es als Blasphemie oder Scherz betrachten. Die Tatsache,
daß Gott eins ist, unteilbar und gleichermaßen in uns allen — wir
können nichts anderes sein als eins — ist zuviel für den menschli-
chen Geist, der sich nur in Dualitäten bewußt ist. *Doch jeder von uns
ist, was der andere ist.* Ich weiß, ich bin der Avatar in jeder Hinsicht
des Wortes und daß jeder von uns ein Avatar ist in dem einen oder
anderen Sinne.''[108]
    Mit dieser interessanten Selbstbeschreibung, die viel philoso-

phisch Wahres enthält, offenbart uns Meher Baba zweierlei. Einmal, daß er in sich Gott begriffen hat und das Anliegen seiner Mission darin sieht, die Vergöttlichung als Ziel der menschlichen Entwicklung zu verstehen. Aber das allein macht ihn noch nicht zu einem Avatāra, wie ich meine. Er glaubt, seine eigene Größe als göttlich erkannt zu haben, doch kann er sich letztlich doch nicht identisch setzen mit der Gottheit, er ist zwar göttlich, aber das macht ihn noch nicht zu einem Avatāra:

"Es ist eine unveränderliche Tatsache seit undenklichen Zeiten, daß Gott alles weiß, alles tut und nichts geschieht als durch den Willen Gottes. Deshalb ist es Gott, der mich sagen macht 'Ich bin der Avatar' und daß jeder von Euch der Avatar ist".[109]

Im Grunde reduziert Meher Baba die Idee des Avatartums auf einen Aspekt, der seit vielen Jahrhunderten von den philosophischen Systemen *Sāṅkhya* und *Vedānta* verkündet wurde, nämlich die Identität der Individual-Seele mit der Kosmischen All-Seele — *Jīva-Puruṣa, Jīva-Brahman*. Unser wahres Wesen würde demnach nicht erst mit der Avatāra-Theorie verständlich.

Dennoch ist der Heilsgedanke der inneren Avatarschaft von jedem von uns, dem Aurobindo in seiner Neudeutung vor allem eine stärkere Betonung verliehen hat,[110] von Bedeutung, nämlich daß Gott nicht nur abstrakt als Brahman existiert oder in fernen Himmeln als unnahbares Geistwesen thront, sondern in uns selbst und unserer *Wahrheit, Güte, Schönheit — Sathyam, Śivam, Sundaram* als wahrer Gott verborgen ist.

Dieser Gedanke der Avatarschaft, die das ganze All durchdringt, findet sich auch in einem Lehrgespräch Kṛṣṇas, als Arjuna ihn einmal einen Avatāra nannte. Kṛṣṇa führte Arjuna daraufhin zu einem Baum und sagte: "Was siehst Du?" Ich sehe Früchte. Büschel über Büschel von Früchten sehe ich, antwortete Arjuna. "Schau ein wenig näher", sagte Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna schaute und jede Frucht, die Arjuna sah, war eine Inkarnation Gottes. Kṛṣṇa daraufhin: "Inkarnationen Gottes sind unzählig."[111]

Nichtsdestotrotz ist die Avatāra-Theorie des Hinduismus als Bhakti-Philosophie von ihrer Struktur dualistisch aufgebaut und betont daher den Aspekt der Gottheit, in dem Ihre unendliche Kraft und Ihr Glanz alle Universen und deren Schönheit und Vielfalt umfaßt, in deren Angesicht alles Dunkle wie Staub zerfällt.

Und daß dieses Allumfassende, Unendliche, Brahman, das so beispiellos Vollkommene, welches wir uns Menschen in den nächsten Jahrmillionen durch mannigfaltigste Lernprozesse Schritt für Schritt aneignen werden, um mit Gott einmal vereint zu sein, *diese unvorstellbare Reinheit und Schönheit möglich ist in der doch kleinen, so verletzbaren wie vergänglichen menschlichen Gestalt, die sterbliche Hülle des Menschen also fähig ist, die Glorie Gottes zu beherbergen, das ist die Gnade und Hoffnung, welche uns die Avatāra-Idee vermittelt.* Zu erkennen, wie ''jede Kreatur ein verkleideter Narayana ist'' (Aurobindo), hat seinen eigenen Glanz. Doch man sollte ihn nicht verwechseln mit dem höchstmysteriösen Geschehen des Herabstiegs der Alleinheit der Gottheit in die Endlichkeit.[112] Um diese Differenz, die in den verschiedenen Avatāra-Interpretationen enthalten sind, aufheben zu können, müssen wir uns ihren jeweiligen Zweck vor Augen führen, der dem Phänomen des 'Göttlichen auf Erden' einen ihm intsprechenden Rahmen gab. Und wie jede Gottesvorstellung von den Interessen und Anschauungen ihrer Zeit geprägt ist, so unterlag auch die Avatāra-Idee Wandlungen.

So bildete die hinduistische Avatāra-Vorstellung zur abstrakten Philosophie des Vedānta z.B. eine eindrucksvolle Alternative, die ihren Anhängern zunächst die Existenz Gottes überhaupt und Seinen Triumph über das Böse vor Augen führen sollte — der bildhafte Gottesbeweis. In der späteren Entwicklung trat dann Seine Güte, Schönheit, Sein Liebreiz, Seine Verspieltheit und Menschlichkeit in den Vordergrund,[113] wie uns dies das Bhāgavata-Purāṇa und das Caitanya-Caritāmṛta offenbart.

Der Mahāyāna-Buddhismus indessen bezog die Idee des Bodhisattwa konsequent ein in das *emanzipative* Anliegen ihrer Religion, nämlich indem er daraufhinwies, daß im Grunde kein Unterschied zwischen der Geburt Buddhas und eines anderen Menschen besteht. Ziel dieser Buddhisten war es, die *Buddhaschaft*, den Stand eines Welterlösers zu erlangen, nicht nur die Arhatschaft (Erlösung), wie im Hinayana gelehrt wird[114]. So lautete die Antwort der Abhidhamma-Schule auf die Frage, warum Buddha bei seiner letzten Geburt sich aussuchte, in einen menschlichen Schoß geboren zu werden: Es inspiriert die Menschen und sie werden von Buddha sagen: ''Er ist auch ein Mensch und sogar ein Mensch kann Vollendung erlangen''[115]

2) *Wissen um die Wahrheit und die vedischen Schriften*

Caitanya sagt: "Wie in anderen Zeitaltern kann eine Inkarnation Gottes als solche laut Anweisungen der Śāstras nur dann akzeptiert werden, wenn der Meister den offenbarten Schriften gemäß spricht."[116]

Einige Meister bemühen sich um eine Wiederbelebung der in den vedischen Schriften niedergelegten Wahrheiten und praktizieren die für das Kali-Yuga vorgeschlagene Art des Sādhana: "das Singen des Namens von Hari".[117] An der Art der Interpretation dieser Weisheiten werden für den Gottessucher dann deutliche Differenzen erkennbar, wobei manche den Buchstaben der Veden getreu folgend nicht bedenken, daß jede Wahrheit in jeder Zeit neu ausgedrückt werden muß.

Die in 1) und 2) genannten Punkte stellen im Grunde Minimalforderungen dar, welche uns zunächst einmal helfen sollen, die Spreu vom Weizen zu unterscheiden. Aber erst das im Folgenden dargestellte Attribut kann einen Avatāra deutlich erkennbar werden lassen.

3) *Unvorstellbare Fähigkeiten*

"Nur durch Seine außergewöhnlichen Fähigkeiten, Sein Geschick und Seine ungewöhnlichen Aktivitäten, *die unvorstellbar sind für verkörperte Lebewesen*, kann man teilweise die Inkarnation der Höchsten Person der Gottheit verstehen."[118]

Dieses auf die Allmacht und Unbegrenztheit Gottes und des Avatāra abzielende Kriterium haben wir schon ausführlich in Kap. II erörtert.

"An zwei Symptomen", sagt Caitanya, — "persönliche und zweitrangige Charakteristika — können große Weise ein Objekt verstehen. Körperliches Aussehen, die Natur und Form, sind persönliche Charakteristika. Das Wissen um Seine (des Avatāra) Aktivitäten stellt die zweitrangigen Kennzeichen dar. Diese zwei verschiedenen Charakteristika werden auch *svarūpa* und *taṭastha* genannt."[119]

"Die zweitrangigen Züge eines Avatāra (taṭastha) haben wir, soweit uns zugänglich, zu beschreiben versucht. Im Folgenden wer-

den wir die *körperlichen Charakteristika* (svarūpa) und zwar an Hand der hinduistischen wie buddhistischen Tradition beschreiben.

4) *Körperliche Merkmale und besondere Umstände*

a . "Am Tag seiner Geburt[120] waren alle Himmelsrichtungen von Freude erhellt und es bereitete allen Leuten Vergnügen wie der Schein des Mondes. Der Fromme erfuhr neue Wonne, der starke Wind war beruhigt und der Fluß floß ruhig dahin, als der Moment herannahte, wo Janārdana (Spielform Kṛṣṇas) geboren werden sollte. Die Ozeane machten Musik mit ihren Murmeln, die Gandharvas (himmlische Musikanten) begannen zu singen und die Apsaras (himmlische Mädchen) zu tanzen. Zum Zeitpunkt von Janārdanas Geburt begannen die Himmlischen von oben herab Blumen herunterzuwerfen und die heiligen Feuer brannten mit sanfter Flamme. Um Mitternacht, als der Unterstützer aller im Begriffe war, geboren zu werden, begannen die Wolken leise Töne von sich zu geben und Blumen herunterregnen zu lassen."[121] In dieser lyrischen Atmosphäre sieht der Verfasser des Viṣṇu-Purāṇa die Geburt Kṛṣṇas stattfinden. Im Weiteren erfahren wir von den *Mahāpuruṣa-Lakṣaṇās*, die uns in der Heldenbeschreibung der *Itihāsa*-Literatur (Erzählwerke) auch begegnen:[122] "Akrura erreichte Gokula kurz vor Sonnenuntergang; und da erblickte er Krishna mitten unter dem Vieh, dunkel wie das Blatt eines vollerblühten Lotus. Seine Augen waren von derselben Farbe und seine Brust war geschmückt mit dem *Śrīvatsa*-Mal. Langarmig, mit breiter Brust, hoher Nase, einem gnadenvollen Gesichtsausdruck und einem Lächeln; sein Schritt war entschlossen und die Nägel seiner Füße waren rotfarben; in gelbe Kleider gehüllt (sein älterer Bruder Balabhadra trug blau) und bedeckt mit einer Girlande von Waldblumen und einer Schlingpflanze in den Händen, welche gerade gepflückt worden war, und einem Kranz von Lotusblumen auf seinem Haupt".[123]

An mehreren Stellen wiederholt sich vor allem die Erwähnung des *Śrīvatsa*-Zeichens auf der Brust Kṛṣṇas.[124] Laut Monier-Williams ist es "ein spezielles Merkmal oder eine Haarlocke auf der Brust Vishnus oder Krishnas oder anderer göttlicher

Wesen. Es heißt, es sei weiß und dargestellt in Bildern durch ein Symbol, welches einer kreuzförmigen Blume ähnelt. Es erscheint auch in der Liste der 80 weniger bedeutsamen Zeichen Buddhas''[125]

Obwohl die Beschreibungen der Avatāra-Merkmale umfangreich sind, so können sie doch nicht über das Grundproblem hinwegtäuschen, daß sie dem subjektiven Empfinden des Untersuchenden in vielen Punkten einen breiten Spielraum läßt. Wenn nämlich das Herz eines Devotees für den eigenen Meister schlägt,

so wird er im Zweifelsfalle dazu neigen, die Vagheit der Beschreibung zugunsten des Meisters zu interpretieren.

Im Folgenden zitiere ich die 32 Zeichen am Körper eines Avatāra, die von Gosvāmī aus dem Jotish, Samudrika, 3. Vers, einem Teil der vedischen Schriften, welcher die Astrologie und Astronomie abhandelt, entnommen sind:

1 . *Pañcadīrgha* — 5 Dinge, die lang gestaltet sein sollen:
   Nase, Hände, Backen, Augen, Kniee.
2 . *Pañcasūksma* — 5 Dinge, klein in Gestalt:
   Haut, Haare, Fingersegmente, Zähne, Haut-Haare.
3 . *Saptarakta* — 7 rote Dinge:
   der äußere Teil des Augapfels nach außen hin, Fußsohle, Handfläche, Stirn, Unter- und Oberlippe, Zunge, Nägel.
4 . *Ṣadunnata* — 6 Dinge höher entwickelt:
   Brust, Schulter, Nägel, Nase, Hüften, Gesicht.
5 . *Trihrasra* — 3 Dinge kleiner in Gestalt:
   Kehle (aber zugleich auch fett), Oberschenkel, Penis.
6 . *Tripṛthu* — 3 Dinge groß gestaltet:
   Ohren, Stirn, Brust.
7 . *Trigambhīra* — 3 Dinge tiefer ausgebildet:
   Nabel, Stimme, Intellekt.

Weiterhin spricht das Bhāgavata-Purāṇa von Zeichen unter der Fußsohle, welche sich bei der Geburt des Avatāra manifestieren: Flagge, Donnerkeil, Lotus-Blume, Keule.[126] Als Handzeichen werden die Flagge, der Donnerkeil und der Lotus genannt.[127]

Brh. Up. I.3.28 nennt noch 4 spezielle Merkmale: "...an der rechten Hand ein tausendspeichiges Rad und eine Keule mit 8 Kanten, an der linken eine Muschel mit 100 Windungen und einem Lotus mit 1000 Blättern.[128]

Eine sehr ausführliche Liste von Fußmerkmalen hat Grierson zusammengestellt und zitiert dabei eine Aufzählung Nābhās:[129]

Rechter Fuß (Zehen)[130]

Jayamāla, der Siegeskranz	Yava (am großen Zeh), das Gerstenkorn
Nara, der Mann	Vajra, der Donnerschlag
Chattra, der Regenschirm	Rahta, der Wagen

Cāmara, der Fliegenwedel

Yamadaṇḍa, Yamas Rute

Siṃhāsana, der Thron

Cakra, das Feuerrad

Mukuṭa, das Diadem

Dhvaja, der Banner

Aṅkuśa, der Elefantenstock

Kalpataru, der Kalpataru

Ūrddhva-rēkha, die aufsteigende Linie

Kamala, der Lotus

Ambara, das Gewand

Śara, der Pfeil

Śēṣa, die Schlange der Ewigkeit

Musala, die Keule

Hala, der Pflug

Lakṣmī, die Göttin Lakṣmī

Aṣṭakōna, das Achteck

Swastika, Swastika

Rechter Fuß (*Ferse*)

Linker Fuß (*Zehen*)

Vindu (am großen Zeh), der Punkt

Jīva, Leben

Gadā, die Keule

Trikōṇa, das Dreieck

Ṣaṭkōṇa, das Sechseck

Śaṅkha, das Muschelhorn

Ardha-candra, der Halbmond

Jambū-phala, der Rosenapfel

Patākā, der Wimpel

Kalaśī, der Krug

Bhūmi, die Erde

Sarayu, der Fluß Sarayu

Candrikā, der Mondstrahl

Haṃsa, der Schwan

Tūṇīra, der Köcher

Dhanuṣa, der Bogen

Vaṃśī, die Flöte

Viṇa, die Laute

Pūrṇa-candra, der Vollmond

Mīna, der Fisch

Trivalī, die 3 Falten

Sudhā-kuṇḍa, der See von Ambrosia

Śakti, der Śakti-Pfeil

Gōṣpada, das Fußzeichen der Kuh

Linker Fuß (*Ferse*)

Laut Caitanya können die 24 verschiedenen Formen von Viṣṇu an den unterschiedlichen Positionen von Keule, Muschelhorn, Feuerrad und Lotusblume erkannt werden, die Er in Seinen 4 Händen hält.[131]

Es heißt *der Körper sei die sichtbar gemachte Seele*. Bei den Vollende-
ten dieser Erde erfreute die Menschen ihr Gleichklang von Körper
und Geist. ''Krishnas überwältigende Schönheit des Gesichts und
der Gestalt, Seine einzigartige Farbe und Sein Teint waren oft The-
ma der Sänger. Bhisma pries Krishna in seiner Sterbehymne:

Das Herzensverlangen dreier Welten, wachend, träumend und
schlafend wurde liebend angestarrt mit unermüdlichen Augen von
allen Zuschauern; der eigentümliche Teint, die glänzende Klei-
dung, die sich kräuselnden Locken, die Sein ovales Lotus-Gesicht
umspielten, der liebevolle Glanz, die berückende Stimme und die
Gnade Seines Lächelns und Gelächters, Seine Rede, Gestik und je-
der Augenblick, der die Jugend und die Frauen nahezu verrückt
machten.''[132]

''Der Anziehungskraft Kṛṣṇas verfällt die gesamte belebte und
unbelebte Natur und wird so erlöst: Die Kühe, die ihre Ohren für
den Nektar der Kṛṣṇa-Lieder spitzten; die Kälber, die Govinda mit
tränenfeuchtem Blick innerlich berührten; die Vögel gar gelten
dem Dichter weise, weil sie mit geschlossenen Augen dem Klang
Seiner Flöte lauschten; Flüsse, Wolken, die Frauen der Bergbe-
wohner und der Govardhana-Berg sind glücklich zu preisen ...''[133]

b . Über die Bedingungen und Umstände von *Buddhas* Herabkunft
heißt es:[134] ''Buddhas erscheinen nicht in der Welt, wenn die
Menschen länger leben als 100.000 Jahre oder weniger als hun-
dert. Buddhas werden nur in Nord-Indien und nur in der
Priester- und Kriegerkaste geboren. Es findet keine physische
Vereinigung von Vater und Mutter statt im Augenblick der
Empfängnis. Während die zukünftige Mutter daliegt und
träumt, tritt der Bodhisattwa in der Form eines weißen Elefan-
ten durch ihre rechte Seite in ihren Schoß. Die Erde zittert und
alle 10.000 Weltsysteme sind erfüllt von Strahlen. Zum Ende
der 10 Monate währenddessen sie das Kind in ihrem Schoße
sitzend mit gekreuzten Beinen sieht, gebärt sie ihn stehend.
Zunächst wird das Kind in einem goldenen Netz empfangen,
dann nehmen die vier herrschenden Götter ihn, legen ihn auf
ein Antilopenfell und reichen ihn seiner Mutter dar. Obwohl
der Bodhisattwa frei von Schleim geboren ist, welches ja übli-
cherweise bei der Geburt vorhanden ist, fallen zwei Wasser-
Schauer, ein heißer, der andere kalt, vom Himmel und baden

Mutter und Kind. Das Kind macht dann 7 Schritte zum Norden hin, fest auf seinen Füßen stehend, schaut nach allen Seiten und während er niemand sieht, der ihm gleicht, gibt er seine Überlegenheit über die ganze Welt bekannt und die Tatsache, daß es seine letzte Geburt sei. 7 Tage nach der Geburt stirbt die Mutter. 32 Zeichen eines Großen Mannes (Mahāpuruṣa) weisen daraufhin, daß das Kind entweder ein Weltbeherrscher (Chakravatti) oder ein Buddha wird.[135,136]

Weiterhin heißt es über die ''Mahāpuruṣa-Lakṣaṇās,[137] welche die physischen Charakteristika nebst intellektuellen, moralischen und spirituellen Begabungen enthalten,'' daß sie als Grundlage für die Bestimmung diente, ob man königlicher bzw. herrschaftlicher Geburt war. Die Beschreibungen, welche über die 32 Merkmale hinausgehen, umfassen auch die typischen Tests bezüglich Stärke, Lernfähigkeit und Ideenreichtum und erwecken so den Eindruck der Größe eines Superman's[138,139]. In dieser Kategorie fällt auch die Idee des *chāyāstambhana*, des Baumes, dessen Schatten statisch bleibt, wenn der Mahāpuruṣa kommt und unter ihm ruht oder verweilt. Die Bilder der Götter fallen herunter vor seine Füße anläßlich eines Besuchs im Tempel als Zeichen seiner Überlegenheit gegenüber den Göttern.[140] Wenn er zur Schule gebracht wird, zeigt sich, daß er soviel wie vier Sprachen und Schriften kennt. Zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt zeigt er, daß er sehr versiert ist in allen Künsten und Wissenschaften: Bogenschießen, Schwimmen, Schreiben, Arithmetik, Poesie, Grammatik, Malen, Drama, Musik, Tanzen, Geschichte, technische Handfertigkeiten und die verschiedensten intellektuellen Vollendungen. Er ist begabt mit Schönheit, Stärke und physischer Tauglichkeit. Seine Stimme ist tief und süß, sein Körper scheint wie Gold oder sogar mehr als Gold. Er ist so stark, daß er einen toten Elefanten über die Stadtmauern fliegen lassen kann, indem er ihn mit seinem Zeh stößt. Er gewinnt einen Ringkampf gegen 500 junge Männer. Sein Körper ist nicht nur lieblich und kraftvoll, sondern ist auch markiert durch 32 Hauptzeichen eines Mahāpuruṣa und 80 weniger bedeutsame Charakteristika:[141]

1. Sein Kopf ist wie eine Haube oder wie ein königlicher Turban, als ob er eine Beule am Kopf hätte.
2. Sein Haar dreht sich in Locken nach rechts, welche dunkelblau sind wie ein Pfauen-Schwanz oder ein gemischtes Kollyrium.

 3. Seine Stirn ist eben und breit.
 4. Zwischen seinen Augenbrauen ist ein weißes Haar, welches den Glanz von Schnee und Silber hat.
 5. Seine Wimpern sind wie die einer Kuh, d.h. vollkommen die Augen umgebend.
 6. Die Pupillen seiner Augen sind sehr dunkel.
 7. Er hat 40 Zähne, welche ebenmäßig sind (oder gleich in Größe).
 8. Es gibt keine Zwischenräume oder Lücken zwischen einem Zahn und dem anderen.
 9. Er hat sehr weiße Zähne.
10. Er hat eine ausgezeichnete Stimme.
11. Sein Geschmackssinn ist sehr fein und scharf.
12. Seine Zunge is groß und schlank.
13. Sein Kiefer ist der eines Löwen.
14. Er hat ebenmäßig gerundete Schultern.
15. Er hat 7 konvexe Oberflächen oder vorstehende Körperteile: die Rückseite der 4 Gliedmaßen, die Schultern, die Schultern und der Rumpf sind sehr fleischig.
16. Der Raum zwischen den Schultern ist gut gefüllt.
17. Seine Haut ist fein und von goldener Farbe.
18. Wenn er aufrecht steht und sich nicht beugt, reichen seine Arme bis herunter zu den Knien.
19. Die Frontpartie seines Körpers ist einem Löwen ähnlich.
20. Sein Körper hat die symmetrischen Proportionen eines Banyan-Baumes — gleich in Höhe und Breite — (die Körpergröße des Bodhisattwa war mit seinen ausgestreckten Armen gleich).
21. Jedes Haar an seinem Körper stellt sich gerade aufrecht.
22. Jedes Haar lockt sich nach rechts.
23. Sein Glied ist verborgen in einer Hülle (zu verstehen als Symbol lebenslanger Keuschheit).
24. Er hat wohlgrundete Oberschenkel.
25. Seine Beine gleichen einer Antilope.
26. Er hat lange Finger.
27. Er hat lange Fersen.
28. Er hat hervorstehende Fußknöchel ähnlich gerundeten Muscheln.

29. Seine Hände sind weich und zart.
30. Seine Hände und Füße sind mit Schwimmhäuten versehen oder netzartig (möglicherweise wie bei einer Gans oder Ente?!)
31. Auf den Fußsohlen sind zwei Räder abgezeichnet, weiß, strahlend und leuchtend, mit 1000 Speichen und vollständig dargestellt mit Radkranz (Felge) und Rad-Nabe.
32. Seine Füße sind wohlgesetzt — die ganze untere Oberfläche berührt den Boden gleichzeitig.

Diese 32 Zeichen, welche einer offensichtlich alten Tradition entspringen, verdanken ihren Ursprung dem nationalen ästhetischen Ideal, dem spirituellen Symbolismus und der Gandhāra-Kunst,[142] meint Har Dayal.[143] Als alternative Deutung wäre denkbar, die Ideale dieser Kunst von den Merkmalen des Mahāpuruṣa abgeleitet zu sehen und ihr ästhetisches Ideal auf die Bewunderung und Verehrung dieser Heilsbringer der Menschheit zurückzuführen. Andererseits beinhalten diese Zeichen Merkmale, die unserem Schönheitsempfinden krass entgegengesetzt sind wie z.B. Nr. 18 — die affenlangen Arme — sowie Nr. 30!

Es fragt sich nun, ob die in den vergangenen Abschnitten genannten Schönheitsideale unveränderliche und unabdingbare Merkmale darstellen, welche notwendig sind, um die Göttlichkeit eines Menschen zum Ausdruck zu bringen, oder ob diese Ästhetik und ihr Empfinden in verschiedenen Zeitaltern Veränderungen unterliegt. Der Kṛṣṇa von vor 5000 Jahren hätte demnach eine andere Gestalt, als der zu erwartende Kalki-Avatāra. Dies sind Fragen, welche es uns schwer machen, sich dem möglichen Avatāra mit einem Katalog von Kriterien zu nähern.

Während Caitanya empfiehlt, ein intelligenter Mensch würde den Avatāra nicht akzeptieren, ohne die prinzipiellen und marginalen Grundzüge zu studieren,[144] meint R. M. Huntington: ''Der Avatāra kann nicht beurteilt werden mit Hilfe der Kraft, Moralität oder was Er tun sollte oder was nicht. Seine Arbeit muß nur eine genaue Angemessenheit aufweisen gegenüber den Nöten der besonderen Phase des göttlichen Dramas, in welcher Er die Rolle spielt.''[145]

Somit bieten uns die Körperzeichen keine letztendliche Gewähr, sondern wir müssen den auf den Seiten 33ff 2) und 3) genannten Kriterien den Vorrang geben, weil sie die essentiellen Attribute eines Avatāra zweifellos am treffendsten beschreiben können.

5) *Der Zeitpunkt*

Am Anfang sprachen wir von den Umständen, anläßlich derer sich ein Avatāra zu inkarnieren angesagt hat: ''Zum Schutze der Tugendhaften und zur Zerstörung der Übeltäter und um Rechtschaffenheit zu etablieren auf festem Grund, inkarniere ich mich von Yuga zu Yuga.''[146] Nach indischer Zeitrechnung sind seit der Zeit Kṛṣṇas ca. 5000 Jahre vergangen und der nächste Avatāra wird als Kalki zum Ende des Kali-Yugas, also erst in ca. 420.000 Jahren, erwartet. Nun wäre vorstellbar, daß das Kali-Yuga in geraffter Form und schneller dem Ende zugeht.[146a] Dagegen sprechen jedoch die Prophezeiungen des Kalki Purāṇa,[147] welche uns eine lange und allmähliche Phase des Niedergangs vorstellen lassen: ''Zwei Leidenschaften allein werden als höchste unter der Menschheit regieren, Lust und die Gier des Magens. Das maximale Alter der Männer wird 20 und das der Frauen 12 Jahre sein. Letztere werden Kinder gebären im Alter von 7.'' Weitere Prophezeiungen wie ''wenn die vedischen Praktiken verdreht worden sind jenseits der Wiedererkennbarkeit''[148] oder ''wenn Könige so gut wie Räuber sind'' [149] sind dem subjektiven Interpretationsvermögen des Einzelnen überlassen und deshalb nicht so aussagekräftig.

An einer Stelle des Bhāgavata Purāṇa ist eine sehr konkrete Vision vom Ende des Kali-Yuga beschrieben: ''Wenn die Untertanen ihrer Frauen beraubt sind und ihr Wohlstand geplündert ist von gierigen, gnadenlosen, räuberartigen Kriegern, dann werden die Untertanen Schutz suchen in den Bergen und Wäldern und von Blättern, Wurzeln, Fleisch, Honig, Früchten, Blumen und Samen leben. Unterdrückt von einer Reihe von Hungersnöten und schwerer Besteuerung, schneidender Kälte, beißenden Winden, wundenerzeugendem Sonnenschein, heftigsten Regenfällen, Schneefall und gegenseitiger Rivalität werden die Menschen zugrunde gehen.''[150]

''Wenn alle Klassen so gut sind wie die Śūdras,[151] dann werden die Kühe auf die Größe von weiblichen Ziegen reduziert sein, ebenso im Milchgeben.''[152]

Ähnlich düster beschreibt das Viṣṇu-Purāṇa das Ende des Kali-Yugas: ''Es beginnt mit dem König Vishwaphatika, der durch Vermischung eine neue Kaste schaffen wird. Er wird die Kriegerkaste

ausrotten und die Fischer, Barbaren, Brahmanen und andere Kasten zur Macht erheben. ... Die Könige werden mürrischen und groben Geistes sein, von verletzender Art, immer der Falschheit und Schlechtigkeit ergeben. Sie werden Frauen, Kinder und Kühe zerstören und sich am Besitz ihrer Untertanen vergreifen ... Sie werden schnell aufsteigen und fallen. Ihre Lebensspanne wird sehr kurz sein. Reichtum und Tugend werden Tag für Tag abnehmen bis die ganze Welt ihrer beraubt sein wird. Reichtum wird das Kriterium sein für Prestige und Tugend.

Leidenschaft und beiderseitige Übereinstimmung wird die einzige Grundlage sein für die Heirat. Falschheit wird das einzige Mittel sein, das zum Erfolg in Rechtsstreitigkeiten führt. Frauen werden nur noch Objekte sinnlichen Vergnügens sein. Die Erde wird (nur) respektiert wegen ihrer mineralischen Schätze. Ein Mann, der gute Kleider trägt, wird als ehrenwert betrachtet.''[153]

In dieser Weise zeichnet das Viṣṇu-Purāṇa ein Bild, materialistischer Dekadenz und Oberflächlichkeit. ''Schließlich werden die Untertanen der habsüchtigen Könige nicht mehr in der Lage sein, die Bürde verschiedener Steuern zu tragen und werden in die Täler und Berge fliehen und froh sein, sich von wildem Honig, Kräutern, Wurzeln, Früchten, Blumen and Blättern zu ernähren. Ihre einzige Kleidung wird die Rinde der Bäume sein und sie werden Kälte, Wind, Sonne und Regen ausgesetzt sein. Niemand wird länger als 23 Jahre leben.[154] Auf diese Weise wird am Ende des Kali-Yugas der größte Teil der Menschheit vernichtet sein.''[153,155]

Und über den zukünftigen Kalki-Avatāra[156] heißt es: ''Auf einem Rennpferd namens Devadatta reitend wird er die ganze Erde durchziehen. Er wird massakern mit Seinem Schwert und wird in der Lage sein, Tausende und Abertausende von Räubern und üblen Schurken zu unterjochen, die sich selbst als Könige ausgaben.''[157]

Mit solchen Aussagen wird deutlich, wie sehr sich das schon bestehende Übel dieser Zeit in einer weiteren Entwicklung noch verschlimmern könnte.

Das Agni Purāṇa[158] fährt fort: ''... Sobald dies geschehen ist, werden die Seelen der Menschen geläutert und ein reiner Wind, der vom salbenduftenden Leib Vāsudevas ausgeht, befächelt die Menschen. Und nachdem der erhabene Vāsudeva in ihren Herzen

eingekehrt ist, erzeugen sie eine kraftvolle Nachkommenschaft, die Menschen des neuen Krita-Yuga, deren Seele wieder von Sattwa erfüllt ist, deren Geist so klar und leuchtend ist wie der Atman selbst.''

Vom Kalki wird weiterhin berichtet, Er würde im Hause von Viṣṇuyaśas, dem edlen Hauptpriester des Dorfes Śambhala (vermutlich nahe Moradabad, 130 km östlich von Dehli) und dessen Frau Sumati geboren; wenn Sonne, Mond und Jupiter vereint sind im Krebs unter der Puṣya-Konstellation, dann wird das goldene Zeitalter einsetzen.[159]

''Meine Gemahlin Lakṣmī wird als Tochter des Königs Brihadratha und der Königin Kaudrudi von Srī Lanka, Padma Debi geboren,''[159] sagte Kṛṣṇa von Seiner zukünftigen Inkarnation. Weiterhin behaupten die Jainas, die Avataras kämen immer in gegensätzlichen Paaren, als Nārāyaṇa und Prati-Nārāyaṇa, als gute und böse Kraft, als Christ und Anti-Christ.[160] Im Augenblick scheint es keine Person zu geben, welcher man eine überaus große schwarzmagische Kraft, wie dies zu Rāmas Zeiten mit Ravana und zu Kṛṣṇas Zeiten mit Kansa der Fall war, zu-schreiben könnte.

Ein wichtiger Punkt in der Avatāra-Doktrin ist die Verläßlichkeit der Prophezeiungen. Eine Methode mit der man die Relevanz dieser Voraussagen bewerten könnte, wäre die Fähigkeit des Prophezeienden, von den damals herrschenden Umständen zu abstrahieren und neue Entwicklungen vorauszusehen, die keine unmittelbare Relevanz zu gesellschaftlichen Ereignissen früherer Zeit haben. Von indianischen Prophezeiungen z.B. ist dies bekannt.[161]

Stattdessen sind die hier zitierten Voraussagen bezüglich des Endes des Kali-Yugas im Wesentlichen eine Extrapolation früherer schon gegebener und vorstellbarer Verhältnisse, sieht man einmal von den Namen der Könige etc. ab.[162]

So scheint eine gewisse Skepsis angebracht bezüglich der Bedeutung der Prophezeiungen, besonders dann, wenn für damalige Verhältnisse sicherlich zeittypische Vorstellungen angewendet wurden, um das Ende des dunkelsten aller Zeitalter zu beschreiben.

Zwar können wir das Comeback der Könige und des Kastenwesens, die in den Voraussagen eine so wichtige Rolle spielen, nicht ausschließen; zumindest jedoch fallen diese Gegebenheiten nicht in

unsere Zeit, was gemäß den Schriften lauten würde, daß auf lange Sicht kein Avatāra zu erwarten ist. So wäre nur noch die Möglichkeit einer außerplanmäßigen Inkarnation eines Avatāra denkbar. Dies steht zwar nicht in den heiligen Schriften der Hindus, aber der Gedanke an einen allmächtigen und vor allem spontanen Gott hielte uns diese Türe offen.

Niederfelderweg-34a,   RAINER SEEMANN
D-54 Koblenz

[1] Die vorliegende Untersuchung ensprang einer Kontroverse in Sathya Sai Babas Āśram im April 1981 über die Kriterien, die einen Avatāra auszeichnen. Für die Anregungen und die kritischen Fragen von damals bin ich Yvonne in Dank verbunden. Hilfreich waren für mich die Unterredungen mit den Pandits und Wissenschaftlern in Puri, Bhubaneswar, Benares und Madras. Besonderen Dank sagen möchte ich Swami Prajñānanda vom Jñāna-Āśram in Cochin und dann vor allem dem Śaṅkaracharya von Puri, der mir bedeutende Hinweise gab. Für die Durchsicht und wertvollen Verbesserungsvorschläge danke ich Herrn Prof. H. von Stietencron, Universität Tübingen, herzlich.

[2] ''Wenn ein Heiliger einer Region einen Tempel hat, wo er verehrt wird, und sein Ruhm weiter zunimmt, so kann man sicher sein, daß eine Legende um ihn entsteht, die ihn zum Avatāra eines Gottes oder Ṛṣis macht.'' (Hermann Jacobi, in: *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol 7 S. 197.) Ähnlich beurteilt R. Hummel (''Das Tor zur Erkenntnis'' in: *Indo-Asia* Nr. 2, 1984, S. 70) die Situation: ''Die übermäßige Selbsteinschätzung indischer Meister der Gegenwart kommt in der inflationären Verwendung des Avatara-Titels zum Ausdruck. Kaum hat ein bekannter Guru eine größere Anhängerschaft gewonnen, wird bereits der Avatara-Mantel an ihn herangetragen, allzu häufig mit seinem offensichtliche Einverständnis''. E. W. Hopkins, *Religions of India*, Boston 1895, S. 522 Anm. berichtet von geradezu kindischen Anwendungen des Avatāra-Gedankens. D. D. Kosambi, ''The Avatar syncretism and possible sources of the Bhagavad-Gītā'', in: *Journal of Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 24-25, 1948-49 S. 121-134, sieht in der Avatāra-Doktrin eine zwangsläufige Reaktion auf die Bedürfnisse des Bhakti-Weges: ''Das Hauptprinzip von Bhakti bedarf nur eines geeigneten Vehikels, welches attraktiver gemacht wird durch die Erhöhung (des Verehrten) und intensive Devotion, welche dessen erhabene Bedeutung unterstreichen soll.'' In psychologischer Sprache würde man von man vom Avatāra als notwendigem Objekt der Projektion sprechen, das gegeben sein muß, um den *absoluten* Charakter der Devotion gegenüber einem Menschen zu rechtfertigen.

[3] Näheres findet sich bei P. Hacker, ''Zur Entwicklung der Avatāralehre'', in: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, Bd. IV, 1960, S. 47ff.

[4] ''Das Göttliche steigt auf den irdischen Plan hernieder, um die Erde zu höherer Stufe emporzuführen. Gott kommt herab, wenn der Mensch emporsteigt ... Durch seine Lehre und sein Beispiel zeigt er, wie sich das menschliche Wesen auf eine höhere Stufe erheben kann'' (S. Radhakrishnan, *Die Bhagavadgita*, Baden-Baden 1958, S. 177).

⁵ "... dies (der Herabstieg) geschieht, um ein spirituelles Modell einer göttlichen Menschheit zu zeichnen, in welchem die suchende Seele des menschlichen Wesens sich verwirklichen kann (Sri Aurobindo Ghose, Essays on the Gita, SecondSeries, Calcutta 1928, S. 231); ebenso K. Dockhorn über Aurobindo in: *Tradition und Evolution*, Gütersloh o.J., S. 166f: "Die herabkommende Gottheit kommt der aufsteigenden Seele entgegen."

⁶ In ähnlicher Weise äußert sich Sathya Sai Baba zum Thema: "Der Avatar kommt als Mensch, um zu demonstrieren, daß der Mensch göttlich, daß der Avatar im Bereich menschlicher Reichweite ist. Der menschliche Geist kann das absolute, eigenschaftslose Prinzip nicht erfassen; es ist abstrakt und jenseits des Bereichs von Sprache, Geist und Intellekt."

⁷ J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, Stuttgart 1978, S. 249: "Gott nicht das abstrakte Höchste Wesen der Philosophen und Dogmatiker, sondern ein Gott, *der zu persönlicher Beziehung und freundschaftlichem Verhältnis bereit ist*, erscheint in sterblicher Gestalt auf Erden."

⁸ Albrecht Weber, *Indische Studien* II 1851, S. 169, behauptete, die Doktrin der Inkarnation und die ausschließliche Verehrung eines persönlichen Gottes würden sich christliche Einflüssen verdanken, so daß das ganze Avatāra-System als Imitation des christlichen Dogmas der Herabkunft Gottes entstand. Diese Ansicht wird von den meisten Forschern wie G. Parrinder, *Avatar and Incarnation*, London 1970, S. 117, E. Abegg und R. Garbe zurückgewiesen mit dem Hinweis, daß Teile der Doktrin wie die "Fischgeschichte" vorbuddhistischen Ursprungs seien. P. Hacker (1960) hat in seiner Forschung wiederum nachgewiesen, wie sich die Idee der Inkarnation über viele Jahrhunderte weiterentwickelte, sodaß ich einen christlichen Einfluß grundsätzlich nicht ausschließen möchte. Schließlich entstanden die Bhakti-Lehren, welche den Avatāra zum Mittelpunkt ihres spirituellen Strebens machten, in der nachchristlichen Zeit; und der *Gnadenaspekt*, den die Avatāras verkörpern, erinnert allzusehr an die christliche Doktrin, als daß ein Einfluß auf den Hinduismus nicht denkbar ist.

⁹ D. Soifer, Towards an understanding of Vishnu's Avatāras' *Purana*, July 1976, S. 144.

¹⁰ Rāma kam am Ende des Treta-Yuga, Kṛṣṇa am Ende des Dvāpara, s. Hermann Jacobi in: *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol 7, S. 194.

¹¹ Aurobindo, *Essays über die Gita*, Gladenbach 1977, S. 161.

¹² A. Eschmann, Der Avatāragedanke im Hinduismus des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, in: *Numen*, International Review for the History of Religions, Vol. XIX, Fasc. 2-3, Leiden 1972, S. 238 greift zum Schluß ihrer Untersuchung gerade diese Frage auf, die Thema unserer Arbeit ist; ebenso G. Parrinder, ebenda S. 14 und 232. Parallel dazu hat P. Bilimoria den Unterschied zwischen "Devas und Avatāras" untersucht in *Vedanta Kesari* Vol. LXVI No. 10, 1979, S. 368.

¹³ R. M. Huntington, Avatāras and Yugas, Purana, Vol. VI, No 1, Jan. 1964.

¹⁴ dies ist die Rangordnung in der Welt der geistigen Meister.

¹⁵ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, Zürich 1960, S. 97 A. 42: "die Kraft, jedes beliebige Objekt (z.B. den Mond) in jeder Entfernung zu erreichen." (s. auch Sāmañña-Phala-Sutta 87ff.).

¹⁶ Siehe auch die Yoga-Sūtras des Patañjali, III, Sūtra 46. Beherrscht man das Sūtra 45, so ist man im Besitz aller 8 Wunderkräfte.

¹⁷ zit. nach Sri Yukteswar, Die Heilige Wissenschaft, Revelation, Sutra 11.

¹⁸ Der Weise *Kardama* manifestierte für seine geliebte Frau ein Luft-Schloß, das sich, gemäß seinem Willen, bewegen konnte (Bhāgavata Purāṇa III, 23, 12).

¹⁹ seinerzeit von Sathya Sai Baba im Frühjahr 1978 in Ooty, Südindien vorgeführt.

²⁰ Ich selbst habe mich um eine Verifizierung dieses erstaunlichen 'Wunders' bemüht, das sich 1978 ereignete; näheres siehe in meinen *Reflexionen über eine Annäherung an Sai Baba*, Bonn 1980², S. 20.

²¹ u.a. vom ehemaligen Head of the Dept. of Sanskrit, Utkal-University, Bhubanaswar, Indien.

²² s. Yoga-Sutra IV, 4-6.

²³ D. G. Mukherji, What is an Incarnation?, *Vedanta Kesari* Vol. LXVI. No. 2, Febr. 1979, S. 48.

²⁴ Die historische Authentizität Kṛṣṇas scheint nach R. Garbe, *Indien und das Christentum*, München 1914, S. 214, gesichert. ''Krischna ist nicht ein anthropomorphisierter Gott, sondern ein deifizierter Mensch'' wendet er gegen die ein, welche Kṛṣṇa als mythologische Gestalt betrachten.

²⁵ Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, Kap. 21, Vers 18-24.

^{25a} Die Dämonin Putana, die Kṛṣṇa nach dem Leben trachtete (s. oben in dieser Arbeit), verbreitete plötzlich einen süßen Duft von Sandelholz, als die Bewohner von Vrindavana ihren Leichnam verbrannten. Schon die Berührung mit dem Avatāra erlöste die Dämonin (Bhāgavata-Purāṇa V 6.34, zit. nach D. R. Kinsley, Flöte und Schwert, München 1973, S. 231. Kinsleys Buch ist eine Fundgrube für Kṛṣṇa-Geschichten).

²⁶ ebenda Madhya-līlā, Kap. 23, Vers 79-81 u. Bhakti-rasāmrta-sindhu 1.2. 37ff.

²⁷ Das Caitanya-caritāmṛta nennt daneben noch 50 Eigenschaften, an dem Kṛṣṇa und seine Verkörperungen zu erkennen sind (Madhya-līlā, 23, Vers 70-78) — aus der Perspektive einer hingebugsvollen Gopi: ''(1) Kṛṣṇa, der höchste Held, besitzt den allerschönsten transzendentalen Körper. (2) Dieser Körper weist sämtliche guten Merkmale auf. (3) Er ist strahlend und (4) den Augen äußerst wohlgefällig. (5) Sein Körper ist mächtig und stark und (6) stets jugendlich. Kṛṣṇa ist der Beherrscher aller wundervollen Sprachen. Er ist ein (8) wahrhaftiger und (9) sehr angenehmern Redner. (10) Er ist ein hervorragender Redner; (11) Er ist hochgelehrt, (12) sehr weise und (13) genial. (14) Kṛṣṇa ist im kunstvollen Genießen sehr erfahren. Er ist äußerst (16) sachkundig, (17) dankbar und (18) in seinen Versprechen fest entschlossen. (19) Er weiß Zeit, Person und Land genauestens zu beurteilen und (20) Er sieht durch die Schriften und autorisierten Bücher. (21) Er ist sehr rein und (22) selbstbeherrscht. (23) Śrī Kṛṣṇa ist standhaft, (24) Seine Sinne stehen unter seiner Kontrolle, und Er ist (25) nachsichtig, (26) besonnen und (27) ausgeglichen. (28) Auch ist Er allen gleichgesinnt. Überdies ist Er (29) großmütig, (30) religiös, (31) ritterlich und (32) mitfühlend. (33) Er ist respektwürdigen Menschen gegenüber stets respektvoll. (34) Kṛṣṇa ist sehr einfach und (35) freigiebig; (36) Er ist bescheiden und verschämt und (37) Er ist der Schutzherr der ergebenen Seele. (38) Er ist sehr glücklich und (39) Er ist stets der wohlmeinende Freund Seiner Geweihten. (40) Er ist allglückverheißend und (41) Er wird durch seine Liebe beherrscht. (42) Kṛṣṇa ist sehr einflußreich und (43) berühmt und (44) Er ist für jeden das Objekt der Anhaftung. (45) Er ist die Zufluchtstätte der Guten und Heldenhaften. (46) Er wirkt auf den Geist der Frauen sehr anziehend und (47) Er wird von jedem verehrt. (48) Er ist sehr, sehr reich. Kṛṣṇa ist der Höchste und daher (49) wird er stets verehrt als (50) der höchste Herr und Kontrollierende. Auf diese Weise sind sämtliche eben genannten transzendentalen Eigenschaften in Ihm vorhanden ...''

[28] Aurobindo ebenda, S. 162.

[29] P. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine* Vol. 5, Adyar 1971, S. 352.

[30] ebenda, S. 351.

[31] J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens* II, Stuttgart 1963 S. 122.

[32] Beispiel: Sarabhanjas Selbstaufopferung vor den Augen Rāmas, beschrieben im Rāmāyaṇa.

[33] II.8.2.; Viṣṇu-Purāṇa V, 37, S. 420.

[34] s. auch *Rāmānuja*: ''Der Körper des höchsten Selbst besteht nicht aus einer Kombination von materiellen Elementen'' (*The Vedanta-Sutras with the Commentary by Rāmānuja*, trs. G. Thibaut, 1904, 1, 3, 2); ''Der Leib des Avatāra besteht aus göttlicher Reinessenz'' (Ait. Up. II, 2).

[35] P. Bilimoria ebenda, S. 369.

[36] I. Conybeare, *Civilisation or Chaos?*, Bombay 1952, S. 66.

[37] Der Dharma nimmt in den vier Zeitaltern jeweils um 1/4 ab und wird zum Ende des Kali-Yuga durch *Kalki* wieder vierfach, d.h. vollständig.

[38] am 4. 10. 81 in Puri, Indien.

[39] Beispiel: Viśvāmitra rief Rāma, um sein Yagya zu beschützen, währenddessen er immer wieder von Dämonen behindert wurde.

[40] siehe S. 96 der vorliegenden Arbeit.

[41] laut Information des Saṅkaracharyas von Puri, ebenda.

[42] Das Viśvakṣeṇa-saṃhitā betrachtet Brahmā, Śiva, Buddha, Vyāsa, Arjuna, Pāvaka und Kuvera als inspirierte Personen oder Aveṣa-Avatāras, die nicht verehrt werden sollten von denen, welche endgültige Befreiung suchen. Ein anderes saṃhitā schließt sogar Rāma ein. (S. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Cambridge 1952, Bd. III, S. 39).

[43] Swami Prajñānanda ebenda.

[44] Swami Akhilānanda, *The Hindu View of Christ*, 1949, S. 24ff., zit. nach G. Parrinder ebenda, S. 232.

[45] siehe Anm. 27 der vorliegenden Arbeit.

[46] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Kap. 20, Prabhupādas Komm. zu Vers 162.

[47] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā, Kap. 21, Vers 100.

[48] siehe Lakṣmī-Tantra, 2. 35.

[49] J. Gonda, *Selected Studies* Vol. IV, History of Ancient Indian Religions: ''The concept of a personal God in ancient Indian religious thought,'' Leiden 1975, S. 15f.

[50] Im Viṣṇu-Purāṇa sagt Kṛṣṇa: ''Meine Haare sollen herabsteigen auf die Erde und sie befreien von der Bürde ihres Leids.'' (V, 1) Diese Aussage soll hervorheben, daß die Arbeit des Aufhebens der Bürde der Erde durch eine sehr geringe Anstrengung bewirkt werden konnte. (s. H. Jacobi, ebenda S. 197).

[51] V. R. S. Chakravarti, *The Philosophy of Sri Ramanuja*, Madras, S. 334.

[52] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, Kap. 20, Vers 292.

[53] ebenda Vers 250f., 295.

[54] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā, Kap. 20, V. 246.

[55] ebenda, Vers 297f.

[56] s. E. Abegg, *Der Messiasglaube in Indien und Iran*, Berlin 1928, S. 46 und 114.

[57] laut Swami Prabhupāda sollen zwei von diesen auch zu den Līlā-Avatāras gehören, s. Caitanya-Caritamṛta ebenda V. 246 Erläuterung.

[58] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, ebenda, Vers 330.

[59] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Kap. 20, Vers 373.

[60] Es gibt unzählige Systeme, welche die verschiedenen Aspekte des Avatāra

phänomenologisch beschreiben und aufzählen. Sie beschreiben dabei die verschiedenen Erscheinungsformen des Avatāra, nicht aber die Grade der Kraft, mit denen er inkarniert; s. S. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Cambridge 1952 Bd. III, S. 39.

[61] *Letters on Yoga* Vol. 22, S. 406-7.

[62] ebenda, S. 418.

[63] *Essays on the Gita* Vol. 13, S. 152.

[64] Diese Form von Kṛṣṇa wird prābhava-prakāśa genannt (s. Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā Kap. 20, Vers 176) und *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* Varanasi 1972, V, 3, S. 325.

[65] Davon wird in Kapitel V, 4 noch ausführlicher die Rede sein.

[66] *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* V, 5, S. 329.

[67] s. Caitanya-Caritāmṛta ebenda Kap. 20, Vers 351f.

[68] H. Torwesten, *Ramakrishna*, Frankfurt 1981, S. 79ff.

[69] P. Hacker ebenda weist nach, daß der Gebrauch des Wortes Avatāra im vischnuitischen Sinne erst im 6. Jahrhundert n. Chr. erfolgt sei; während R. Garbe, *Indien und Christentum*, München 1914, S. 212 sagt: "Megasthenes, der im 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. als Gesandter des Seleukos Nikator am Hofe zu Pāṭaliputra weilte, nennt in seinen Berichten in unverkennbarer Weise den Krischna als Avatāra des Vischnu."

[70] M.&J. Stutley, *Dictionary of Hinduism*, London 1977, S. 32f.

[71] "Für die Veden gibt es keine Avatāras; Rāma, Sohn des Jamadagni, ist nur ein harmloser Weiser, der traditionelle Autor einer ungefährlichen Hymne, nämlich Rig-Veda X, 110" (D. D. Kosmabi ebenda, S. 125). Nach J. N. Banerjee findet sich die früheste Erwähnung des Avatāra-Gedankens in Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa und im Taitrīya Saṃhitā.

[72] Bhāgavata-Purāṇa I, 3. 24. Bis 800 n. Chr. variierten die Zahl und die Namen der Avatāras hoffnungslos (R. C. Hazra, "Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs," *University of Dacca Bulletin* XX, 1936, S. 88) Sie erreicht in der Pancarātra-Samhitas gar die fest umrissene Gruppe von 39 Avatāras (A. Gail, *Paraśurāma*, Brahmane und Krieger, Wiesbaden 1977, S. 219).

[73] D. Soifer, ebenda, S. 133; R. G. Bhandakar datiert die früheste Erwähnung der Theorie der 10 Avatāras auf 1014 n. Chr. in: *Collected Works* I, Poona 1933, S. 301 ff.

[74] Bhāgavata-Purāṇa II. 7. 37.

[75] "Bekanntlich erschien Buddha, um die Ungläubigen durch seine Irrlehren dem Verderben zu überantworten." (E. Abegg, ebenda, S. 96 Anm.) Auch "ergibt sich aus den puranischen Schriften keine Evidenz, die irgendeine Annahme unterstützen könnte, daß der Buddha-Avatāra ein weiterer Schritt im evolutionären Prozeß darstellt" (R. M. Huntington, ebenda). Stattdessen spitzt sich die Kontroverse zwischen Hinduisten und Buddhisten im Kalki-Purāṇa derart zu, daß nach diesem den gottlosen Buddhisten die Vernichtung durch *Kalki* bevorsteht.

[76] s. auch R. M. Huntington, ebenda, S. 36f; A. Eschmann ebenda, S. 229; A. Gail, "Buddha als Avatāra Viṣṇus im Spiegel der Purāṇas," in: *XVII Deutscher Orientalistentag*, Teil 3 ZDMG Supplementa, I, 1969, S. 917ff.

[77] D. D. Kosambi schreibt diese Widersprüche der "wachsenden Popularität der Avatāra-Doktrin zu, die nach einem viele historische und mythologische Legenden umfassenden System verlangte und dabei sich in eine pseudochronologische Anordnung von Geschichten und die Universalisierung von örtlichen Geschehen verstrickte." (Kosambi ebenda, S. 125).

[78] H. Zimmer, *Philosophie und Religion Indiens*, Zürich 1961, S. 171f und 424.

[79] Richard A. Gard, *Der Buddhismus*, Genf 1972, S. 117: "Die Hīnayānisten, selbst in ihren frühesten Entwicklungsstufen, erkannten vierundzwanzig dahingeschiedene Buddhas an, von denen jeder einen besonderen Bodhi-Baum hatte. Auch die Mahāyānisten haben verschiedene Verzeichnisse, obgleich diese nicht systematisch sind, und es wurden 32 verschiedene Namen wiederentdeckt. Die letzten sieben Tathāgatas sind gut bekannt und werden von den Mahāyānisten als Mānusī oder Sterbliche Buddhas bezeichnet..."

[80] Das Buddhavama (II, p. 59) betont, daß der Boddhisattwa ein Mensch (und männlich) sein muß (G. Parrinder ebenda, S. 158).

[81] s. C. F. Koeppen, *Die Religion des Buddha und ihre Entstehung* I, Berlin 1906, S. 311.

[82] W. D. O'Flaherty, *The Origin of Evil in Hindu Mythology*, Berkeley 1980, S. 282.

[83] Schiva erscheint gemäß diesem Text jedesmal als ein Yoga-Lehrer, der vier Schüler ausbildet (H. v. Glasenapp, *Der Hinduismus*, München 1922, S. 134.

[84] H. v. Glasenapp, ebenda, S. 133.

[85] E. Abegg ebenda, S. 3f; ein zukünftiger Śiva-Avatāra wird nicht erwartet.

[86] R. M. Huntington ebenda, S. 13.

[87] "Dies ist die Dritte Zeit, die Zeit, in der ihr lernen werdet, mein Evangelium zu begreifen, auszuüben und zu leben. In der Ersten Zeit ließ ich mich auf einem Berg nieder und sandte euch von dort aus mein Gesetz, in Stein gemeißelt. In der Zweiten Zeit stieg ich ins Tal hinab, um unter euch zu leben. In der Dritten Zeit mache ich euere Herzen zu meiner Wohnung, so daß ich mich kundtun und mit euch sprechen kann von euerem innersten Herzen aus."
"Nicht nur einmal, sondern oftmals und in verschiedener Weise zeigte ich an und versprach ich meinen Jüngern mein Wiederkommen. Ich sagte ihnen die Zeichen voraus, die meine Ankunft ankünden würden: Zeichen in der Natur, Geschehnisse in der Menschheit, Weltkriege, die Sünde auf ihrem höchsten Entwicklungsgrad. Doch damit sich die Welt nicht täusche, indem sie mich wieder als Mensch erwartete, ließ ich sie wissen, daß Christus auf den Wolken kommen werde, dem Symbol des Jenseits, von wo mein Strahl ausgeht, d.h. im Geist." (*Kundgabe aus der spiritualistischen Bewegung in Mexiko*, Die Dritte Zeit, Buschhoven 1984).

[88] s. K. S. Murty, *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta*, 1959, S. 7ff, 278f, zit. nach G. Parrinder ebenda, S. 61: "Shankara kann die Avatara-Theorie nicht akzeptieren. Denn da alle Individuen Brahman sind, in welcher Weise ist ein Avatara höher? ... Ein Avatara als Phänomen der empirischen Welt ist schon eine Illusion, aber da Gott nicht wirklich zum Menschen wird, so ist seine Erscheinung eine doppelte Illusion."

[89] Rāma war König und Kṛṣṇa war der Regent im Hintergrund, der Könige entthronte und einsetzte.

[90] dem war jedoch zunächst die Etablierung der *Vorherrschaft Viṣṇus* gegenüber Śiva vorausgegangen, was im Rāmāyaṇa sich darin ausdrückt, daß Paraśurma, der mit Śiva identifiziert wird, von Rāma, der mit Viṣṇu identisch ist, besiegt wird (A. Gail, 1977, S. 49).

[91] Der Kult des Maitreya, des kommenden Buddha, kam durch den Mahāyāna-Buddhismus um 500 n. Chr. zur vollen Entfaltung (E. Abegg ebenda, S. 199).

[92] A. Besant, *Avatāras*, Madras 1899; "Unser physikalisches System hat sein Zentrum, die große spirituelle Intelligenz, manifestiert als Trinität, der Iswara dieses Systems. Doch über ihm gibt es einen mächtigeren Iswara jenes Systems ...

und über ihm noch ein anderer, und über ihm andere und wieder andere, solange bis die physikalischen Universen jenseits unseres Denkens liegen — die spirituelle Hierarchie erstreckt sich weit über unser Denken. Doch sind wir nicht reif für diese höchsten Manifestationen, wo Arjuna schon vom Glanz Krishnas geblendet war. A. Besant zitiert sogar eine hinduistische Quelle zur Stützung ihrer These: Devi-Bhāgavata, IV, 3, 7f.

[93] Häufig wird der Avatāra in der esoterischen Literatur als "Götterbote" angesehen (s. P. Michel, *Das Weltbild der Yoga-Meister*, München 1982, S. 274ff.) P. Brunton, *Weisheit des Überselbst*, Freiburg 1949/1977, S. 390, beschreibt den Avatāra als Wesen einer höheren Lebenssphäre: "Eine solche Offenbarung, ein solcher Messias, Avatar oder Sohn Gottes ist nicht eine direkte Inkarnation in dem engen Sinne des Ausdrucks, sondern ein Wesen von einem höheren Planeten, dessen Reinheit oder Weisheit ihn geeignet machen, um ein Kanal für Gottes Macht zu sein." Derartige Ansichten würden die Vokabel 'Avatāra' entbehrlich machen und das Avatāra-Konzept in Frage stellen.

[94] Aufmerksamkeit verdient die Stellungnahme von Brotherhood of Humanity, Centreville, Virginia, 1982:
"Im Grunde ist ein Avatar jemand, der einen Göttlichen Aspekt beseelt... Zum Zwecke der Klarheit können die verschiedenen Typen von Avataren eingeteilt werden in fünf Gruppen. Wir vergegenwärtigen uns dabei, daß jeder Avatar ein Strahl von glänzender und vervollkommneter Glorie ist, ausgehend von einer reinen Spirituellen Quelle. Er Selbst kleidet sich in Materie zum Zwecke des Dienstes. Solch eine selbstbewußte Individualität erlangt das Recht zu dieser speziellen Form des Dienstes *aufgrund einer Reihe von vorangegangenen Leben der Vollendung.*
1. Die kosmischen Avatare.
2. Die solaren Avatare.
3. Die inter-planetaren Avatare.
4. Die planetaren Avatare.
5. Die menschlichen Avatare.
Alle Avatare, im strikten Sinne des Wortes, sind befreite Seelen, aber die kosmischen und die solaren Avatare sind befreit von den niederen Ebenen des Kosmischen Planes; während die planetarischen und inter-planetarischen Avatare befreit sind vom kosmischen physischen Plan (unseren zielgerichteten Ebenen), so haben die menschlichen Avatare Freiheit von den fünf Ebenen der Strebens...." Als "Methoden, mit Hilfe derer bestimmte kosmische Existenzen und bestimmte hochentwickelte Persönlichkeiten unter den Menschen erscheinen, um eine bestimmte Arbeit zu tun", sind folgende genannt:
Die Methode des 'Überschattens'
Die Methode des Verkörperns eines Prinzips.
Die Methode gegenwärtig im Mysterium Christi oder des Bodhisattvas.
Die Methode einer direkten Inkarnation.
"Von diesen ist die übliche und am meisten gebrauchte Methode die erste. Wenn ein Mensch eine bestimmte Enwicklungsstufe erreicht hat und in der Lage ist, der Welt zu dienen, dann geschieht es, daß er (oder sie) überschattet werden...Jeder ernsthafte, disziplinierte Schüler kann ein Center sein, durch welches seine oder ihre Kraft seine Energie und Macht zum Fließen bringen kann zum Wohle der Welt..." Menschliche Genies sind nach dieser Kundgabe gesegnet durch die Göttlichen Kräfte hochentwickelter Wesenheiten, deren Aufmerksamkeit und deren Unterstützung sie für ihr eignes Dasein gewonnen haben. "Ein Avatar *ist*, doch ein Adept *wird gemacht*. Oft wird das Kosmische Wesen das Vehikel eines Adeptes benutzen, um die physischen Ebenen zu kontaktieren."

[95] Für bedeutsam halte ich die Meinung von Alice A. Bailey, *Die geistige Hierarchie tritt in Erscheinung*, Bietigheim 1978², 301ff. Von den 5 Gruppen, in die sie die Avatāras einteilt, ist die letzte "in diesem Weltzyklus durch keine menschliche Inkarnation gegangen... Sie kommen (jedoch) niemals tiefer als bis zur Mentalebene herab." Sie inspirieren die unter ihnen liegenden Ebenen, treten aber selbst physisch nicht in Erscheinung. Nur die Avatāras der 4. Gruppe, zu der sie Buddha und Christus zählt, "kann bis zur physischen Ebene herabkommen und in sichtbarer Gestalt erscheinen; so kann er die Stimulierung und Qualität der Kraft des größeren Avatāras, der nur bis zur Mentalebene kommen kann, abschwächen und übermitteln."

[96] Viṣṇu-Purāṇa II, 3, S. 121.

[97] auch im Neo-Hinduismus von Sathya Sai Baba steigen die Avatāras nur in Indien herab.

[98] "Sri Kṛṣṇa, Er ist die letzte Quelle aller Universen" (Caitanya-Caritāmṛta ebenda, Kap. 20, Vers 151; in der buddhistischen und der Jain-Literatur werden Rāma und Kṛṣṇa in Legenden als gänzlich menschliche Gestalten beschrieben, ohne daß man ihnen einen göttlichen Status zuschriebe.

[99] Der Gott Brahmā ist bekannt für die ungewöhnliche Eigenschaft, 4 Köpfe zu haben.

[100] zit. aus Caitanya-Caritāmṛta ebenda, Kap. 21, Vers 65-86.

[101] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Kap. 20, Vers 352 und 354.

[102] s. S. 103, 3. a).

[103] Bhāgavata Purāṇa XI, 16. 40.

[104] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Kap. 20, Vers 352 und 354.

[105] V. R. S. Chakravarti ebenda; Viṣṇu-Purāṇa V, 13, S. 352.

[106] *Letters on Yoga*, Vol. 22, S. 418.

[107] D. G. Mukherji ebenda, S. 46.

[108] I. Conybeare, *Civilisation and Chaos?*, Bombay 1959, S. 107.

[109] ebenda.

[110] s. Anm. 5.

[111] D. G. Mukherji ebenda, S. 47.

[112] Aurobindo: "Dieser Zweck (der Herabkunft des Avatara) ist es gerade zu zeigen, daß die menschliche Geburt mit all ihren Begrenztheiten zu solchem Mittel und Werkzeug für die göttliche Geburt und das göttliche Wirken werden kann." (Essays über die Gita, Gladenbach 1977, S. 163). Wenn wir jedoch bedenken, daß selbst Viṣṇus Tierinkarnationen (Fisch, Schildkröte, Eber) dem Göttlichen schon als Gefäß dienen konnten, wenn auch kein Purna-Avatāra sich in Tiergestalt inkarnierte, dann müßten wir ganz anders argumentieren: *Gott in seiner Allmacht ist es gegeben, selbst in der Gestalt eines Tieres oder Menschen Seine Göttlichkeit zu offenbaren, nicht weil beide Formen der Inkarnation an sich göttlich sind, sondern weil Gott sich einen Körper von tierischem oder menschlichem Aussehen schaffen kann, welcher den göttlichen Glanz auch auf dieser Stufe der Entwicklung aufscheinen läßt.*

[113] Vāsudeva über Seine Inkarnation als Kṛṣṇa: "Wer kann einen größeren Liebreiz aufweisen als ICH? Niemals zuvor hat jemand einen solchen Liebreiz erlebt, der alle in Erstaunen versetzt. Ach, Mein Geist ist beim Anblick dieser Schönheit verwirrt, und ICH hege den heftigen Wunsch, sie wie Rādhā zu genießen" (Caitanya-Caritāmṛta ebenda, Kap. 20, Vers 182f.

[114] H. Zimmer, ebenda, S. 453.

[115] zit. nach G. Parrinder ebenda, S. 136.

[116] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā, Kap. 20, Vers 352.

[117] siehe Bhāgavata Purāṇa XI. 5. 32 und XII. 3. 52.

[118] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Madya-līlā, Kap. 20, Vers 355 und Bhāgavata Purāṇa X. 10. 34.

[119] Caitanya ebenda, Vers 356, 357, 358, 362. Es mag erstaunen, daß Caitanya die *Taten* des Avatāra als 'zweitrangig' bezeichnet und ihnen die persönlichen vorzieht. s. dazu Anm. 113.

[120] Der Avatāra kommt immer durch den Schoß einer Frau zu unserer Welt herab.

[121] Viṣṇu-Purāṇa V, 3, S. 325; s. auch Bhāgavata-Purāṇa X, 3, 2 und Harivamsa 60, Vers 3318f.

[122] V. Raghavan, "Raghuvamsa," in: *Annals of Oriental Research*, Univ. of Madras 1957, Vol. 13, S. 83.

[123] Viṣṇu-Purāṇa V, 17, S. 362.

[124] Viṣṇu-Purāṇa V, 3; V, 17; V, 18; V, 20.

[125] *Sanskrit-English-Dictionary*, Oxford 1960, S. 1100.

[126] V. 4. 1.

[127] Viṣṇu-Purāṇa V, 18, S. 363 siehe auch Harivamsa 60, Vers 3325.

[128] zit. nach H. v. Glasenapp, *Madhvas Philosophie des Vishnu-Glaubens*, Bonn 1923, S. 37.

[129] G. A. Grierson, "The Auspicious Marks on the Feet of the Incarnate Deity," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, London 1910, S. 87-93.

[130] siehe die Illustration von Viṣṇus Füßen, aus dem Museum für Indische Kunst, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin (West), mir freundlicher Genehmigung.

[131] Caitanya-Caritāmṛta ebenda, Kap. 20, Vers 221 ff.

[132] Bhagavan Das, "Krishna, a study in the theory of Avatāra," *Shama*, April/July 1920, S. 13f.

[133] A. Gail, *Bhakti im Bhagavatpurana*, Wiesbaden 1969, S. 101; s. Bhāgavata Purāṇa X, 21. 13, 14, 20.

[134] Nach einer singhalesischen Berechnung soll Maitreya, der Nachfolger des letzten Buddha Sakyamuni, im Jahre 4457 n. Chr. 5000 Jahre nach Buddhas Nirvāna geboren werden. (C. F. Koeppen ebenda I, S. 424 und II, S. 14).

[135] G. P. Malalsekera, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, Ceylon 1972, S. 229 und Abhidharma-kosabhasya.

[136] Richard A. Gard, *Der Buddhismus*, Genf 1972 S. 117: "Sowohl die Mahāyānisten als auch die Hīnayānisten glauben, daß ein Buddha ein Wesen ist, das mit 32 günstigen Haupt- und Nebenzeichen ausgestattet ist, bekannt als "Äußere Merkmale", wie sie im Dharmasaṃgraha, das dem Nāgārjuna zugeschrieben wird, aufgezählt werden. Zusätzlich muß er drei Arten geistiger Merkmale besitzen, nämlich die 10 Balas oder Kräfte, 18 Āveṇika Dharmas oder besondere Eigenschaften oder die vier Vaiśaradyas oder Gründe des Selbstvertrauens oder der Sicherheit."

[137] Andere Namen für die Mahāpuruṣa-Lakṣaṇās sind: Samudrika-L. Vyañjana und Anuvyanjana. Die Theorie hat sehr alte Wurzeln. (V. Raghavan ebenda) s. auch Har Dayal. *The Boddhisattwa Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, London 1932, S. 299 ff., 305; V. Raghavan, "Buddhological works and epics," Adyar Library Bulletin, ii (Dec. 1956)".

[138] V. Raghavan ebenda.

[139] Das einzig annähernd vergleichbare Bild eines Gottmenschen, das uns aus der westlichen Tradition bekannt ist, ist die Gestalt des *Herakles*, der, durch die

Zeugung von Zeus und die Empfängnis der Menschenfrau Alkmene, während seiner Erdenzeit zwar göttliche Kraft demonstrierte, aber auch menschlichen Fehl verriet.

[140] *Lalita Vistara*, ediert von S. Lefmann, Halle 1902, S. 105.

[141] ebenda, S. 105f.

[142] Nach-christliche indische Kunstperiode, die unter hellenistischem Einfluß stand.

[143] *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, Delhi 1970.

[144] *Prabhupāda, Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, Tokyo 1974, S. 91.

[145] "Avatāras und Yugas," *Purana* Vol. VI, No. 1, 1964, S. 11.

[146] Bhagavat-Gītā IV, 6-8, Bhāgavata Purāṇa IX, 24, 56.

[146a] Von A. Bailey wird gerade dieses behauptet: im Jahre 1420 n.Chr. sei von einer unsere Geschicke bestimmenden Hierarchie ein Entschluß zugunsten der Beschleunigung der Erd-/Welt-Entwicklung gefallen.

[147] ausführliche Zitierung s. E. Abeggs ebenda, S. 71ff.

[148] Bhāgavata Purāṇa III. 2. 19; Viṣṇu-Purāṇa IV, 24.

[149] ebenda, I. 3. 25.

[150] XII. 2. 9f.

[151] unterste Kaste, Kaste der einfachen Arbeiter.

[152] Bhāgavata Purāṇa XII. 2. 14.

[153] Viṣṇu-Purāṇa IV, 24, S. 310f.; s. auch E. Abegg, S. 26ff.

[154] Das Bhāgavata-Purāṇa spricht von 50 Jahren (XII, 2. 11).

[155] Die bedrückende Beschreibung des Kali-Yuga könnte uns glauben machen, daß diese Endzeit, abgesehen von der Hoffnung erweckenden Herabkunft des Avatāra, negativen Charakter trüge. Doch eine Stelle im Viṣṇu-Purāṇa (VI, 2, S. 431ff) eröffnet uns ein ganz neues Bild — das Geheimnis um das Kali-Yuga, diese eine große Tugend des ansonsten tückischen Zeitalters: Es versammelten sich einmal die Weisen und diskutierten darüber, zu welcher Zeit die Menschen bei geringster Tugendhaftigkeit die größte Belohnung erlangen könnten und von wem dies am einfachsten erreicht würde. Um die Diskussion zu einem Ende zu bringen, gingen sie zu Veda-Vyasa, um sich ihrer Zweifel zu entledigen. Sie sahen den erleuchteten Weisen im Ganges baden und erwarteten die Beendigung seiner Waschung. Während sie ihn ins Wasser tauchen und wieder auftauchen sahen, hörten sie ihn sagen: "Vortrefflich ist das Kali-Yuga." Wieder tauchte er unter und wieder hörten sie ihn sagen: "Gut getan, gut getan, Śūdra, du bist glücklich." Wieder versank er und sie hörten ihn sagen: "Gut getan, gut getan, Frauen, sie sind glücklich, die ein günstigeres Schicksal haben als jene ..."

Er fragte sie: "Weshalb seid ihr hierher gekommen?" "Wir trugen uns mit einigen Zweifeln bezüglich eines Themas und kamen, um Dich zu konsultieren. Aber lassen wir das für's erste. Erkläre uns zunächst etwas anderes. Wir hörten Dich sagen, das Kali-Yuga sei vortrefflich. Wir sind bestrebt zu erfahren, wieso dies gesagt wurde" ... "Hört Ihr Weisen, wieso ich sagte 'gut getan, gut getan'. Die Frucht der Buße der Enthaltsamkeit, der des leisen Gebets und ähnlichem, im Krita-Yuga für zehn Jahre praktiziert, im Tretā-Yuga für ein Jahr, im Dwāpara für einen Monat wird im Kali-Yuga während eines Tages und einer Nacht erreicht. Die Belohnung, die der Mensch im Krita-Zeitalter durch abstrakte Meditation, im Tretā-Yuga durch Opfer, im Dwāpara durch Anbetung erreicht, bekommt er im Kali-Yuga durch das bloße *Wiederholen des Namens Gottes* ... Durch sehr wenig Übung kommen die Menschen zu erhabener Tugend und deswegen spreche ich so lobend vom Kali-Yuga. Früher wurden die Veden von den Zweige-

borenen durch fleißige Übung von Selbstverleugnung erreicht und es war ihre Pflicht, Opfer darzubringen in Übereinstimmung mit dem Ritual. Danach wurden nichtige Gebete, Heldentaten und fruchtlose Zeremonien ausgeführt, nur um die Zweigeborenen zu verführen. Denn obwohl sie die Zeremonien in Ergebenheit ausführten, so wurde aufgrund einiger Unregelmäßigkeiten in der Ausführung Sünde in ihre Werke gebracht und alles, was sie aßen oder tranken, brachte ihnen keine Erfüllung ihrer Wünsche. In all diesen Dingen erfreuten die Zweigeborenen sich keiner Unabhängigkeit und erreichten ihre jeweiligen Sphären nur durch übermäßiges Leid. Auf der anderen Seite erlangten die Sūdras, begünstigter als sie, das ihnen bestimmte Ziel, indem sie ihren Dienst darbrachten und das Opfer vollzogen, Speise zuzubereiten, welche von keinen Regeln beschränkt waren. ... Daher, o große Weise, sind die Sūdras glücklich.

Die Menschen sollten Wohlstand mit Mitteln erreichen, die nicht mit ihren religiösen Pflichten unvereinbar sind und ihr Reichtum sollte den Würdigen gegeben und für Opfer benützt werden. Im Kali-Yuga ist der Erwerb von Geld und sein Schutz mit großen Schwierigkeiten verbunden und es ist gleichermaßen schwierig für die Menschen, es für fromme Zwecke zu verwenden... O hervorragende Brahmanen, indem diese Schwierigkeiten und Widrigkeiten durchgestanden werden, erreichen sie die Region von Prajapati. Eine Frau muß nur ihren Ehemann ehren in Tat, Gedanke und Wort, um die gleiche Region zu erreichen, zu der ihr Ehemann aufgestiegen ist und so erreicht sie ihr Ziel ohne viel Übung ... Tatsächlich wird im Kali-Yuga der Pflicht derjenigen ohne viel Schwierigkeiten Genüge geleistet, deren Sünden alle durch die Wasser ihrer individuellen Frömmigkeit weggewaschen sind — von den Sudras durch fleißigen Dienst an den Zweigeborenen und von den Frauen durch die geringe Anstrengung des Gehorchens ihren Ehemännern gegenüber ...'' siehe auch Bhāgavata Purāṇa XII. 3. 51f.

¹⁵⁶ Kalki bedeutet ''der Befleckte''.
¹⁵⁷ Bhāgavata Purāṇa XII. 2. 19/20.
¹⁵⁸ ed. *Bibliotheca Indica* 16, 8f. zit. nach E. Abegg ebenda, S. 65.
¹⁵⁹ Bhāgavata Purāṇa XII. 2. 18/24 und Viṣṇu-Purāṇa IV, 24, S. 311.
¹⁶⁰ Bhagavan Das ebenda, S. 2.
¹⁶¹ Im Folgenden zitiere ich eine Erklärung des Häuptlings Katchongva von den Hopis, der versuchte, diese den Vereinten Nationen in New York vor einigen Jahren vorzutragen. Sie basiert auf einer heiligen Steintafel:
1. Eine Serie von Erdbeben, wird sich im ganzen Land ereignen und geschieht den Menschen als Warnung, zu bereuen. Wenn sie diese Warnungen nicht beachten und nicht bereuen, bevor es zu spät ist, so wird ein schlimmes Erdbeben sie treffen, welches viele Städte verheeren wird und den Tod großer Menschenmassen zur Folge hat.
2. Fluten werden gesehen an Plätzen, wo sie noch nie zuvor gesehen wurden.
3. Es wird sich eine große klimatische Veränderung weltweit ereignen; heiß/kalt, trocken/feucht. In jedem Fall wird es das Schlimmste sein seit Menschengedenken.
4. Hungersnot, Pest, Krankheit und Plagen werden das ganze Land durchziehen.
5. Die Hopis sind gewarnt worden, sich niemals von den großen Erfindungen abhängig zu machen, welche die Weiße Rasse ihnen bringen würde. Es wurde ihnen gesagt, ein Beleuchtungssystem würde im ganzen Land installiert und alles, was man zu tun hätte, wäre die Wand zu berühren, um den Raum zu erleuchten. Eines Tages jedoch, so wurde uns gesagt, würde dieses System

auf einmal abgeschnitten und die Leute würden in Panik ausbrechen. Wir wurden auch gewarnt vor fließendem Wasser, welches in unsere Häuser käme. Dieses Wasser würde verschmutzt und jeder, der von ihm abhängt, würde sterben oder furchtbar krank werden.

6 . Es wird ein furchtarer Kampf im ganzen Land entstehen. Stadt gegen Stadt, Dorf gegen Dorf, Familie gegen Familie. Die Hopis wurden gewarnt, daß sie in ihren Reservaten bleiben.

7 . Der Mond wird sich in Blut verwandeln und die Sonne wird ihr Antlitz vor Scham verbergen.

8 . Die Jahreszeiten werden sich ändern und Eis wird von den Nord-Ländern eindringen.

Die Hopis glauben, daß ein Messias, ein wahrer weißer Bruder, eine rote Mütze und einen roten Umhang tragend, zur Erde zurückkehren und versuchen wird, die Dinge für uns in Ordnung zu bringen.

[162] E. Abegg ebenda, S. 23 ist der Meinung, daß die Überflutung großer Teile Indiens durch Barbarenvölker und die Ausübung der Herrschermacht durch landesfremde Könige Eingang in die Purāṇas gefunden hat.

SOME CLAIMS OF XENOGLOSSY IN THE ANCIENT LANGUAGES

J. GWYN GRIFFITHS

The principal aim of this paper is to present hitherto unpublished evidence relating to a particular claim of xenoglossy in Ancient Egyptian. It has been thought worthwhile, at the same time, to offer a brief review of some other alleged instances.

I. Introduction: The Pentecost Claim

The ability to speak in languages other than one's first language is commonly the result of early contact or of study and training. When such an ability occurs without any of these advantages, the term 'xenoglossy' is used of it. The restriction is not very logical, admittedly, but it is convenient. As with linguistic ability generally, various grades are normally distinguished. 'Xenoglossy'[1] is sometimes used to indicate the mere ability to reproduce the sounds of another language without any apparent instruction. A higher grade is clearly implied by the ability to use the language flexibly and to answer questions phrased in it. The expression 'responsive xenoglossy' is occasionally used to denote this faculty.

An instance conveyed through mediumship is described by Ernest Bozzano[2] in Case 30 of his third category (cases obtained by 'direct voice'). It concerns a séance held near London on February 27th, 1924, when Caradoc Evans, 'the well-known Welsh writer and dramatist', was present. The medium was 'Valiantine', of whom it is said that she was born and lived in the United States and did not know a word of Welsh. At first Caradoc Evans was addressed in English by a voice claiming to be that of his father. 'Speak to me in your own language' was the challenge made by Caradoc—in Welsh. Whereupon the voice proceeded to do so fluently, answering questions about where he had died and giving a detailed description of the house in Carmarthen where he had lived. The conversation was then cut short, but we are told (p. 142) that

'the sceptical Caradoc Evans had already been convinced of the ac-
tual presence of his father.' Bozzano cites other similar cases, and
as an advocate of spiritualistic communication he naturally finds
them especially convincing since they often involve languages that
are not widely known. What is somewhat unclear in the case cited is
the role of the medium. If she simply enabled the 'direct voice' to
come through, this voice was using its first language and no true
xenoglossy is implied.

The phenomenon would obviously have special importance if it
could be proved to have applied to the ancient languages. A well-
known example from the ancient world itself has been seen by
many in the account of the linguistic miracle on the day of Pentecost
(Acts 2. 4 ff.), where it is said of the disciples that they 'began to
speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance' (RSV). A
Pauline expression (1 Cor. 14. 5) invites comparison: 'Now I want
you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy.' Paul is
referring to ecstatic utterance—glossolalia—and a recent admirable
study[3] shows that the same phenomenon was probably activated by
the experience of Pentecost, even if Luke wishes to present it mainly
as xenoglossy.[4] The possibility also emerges, in ancient as in
modern glossolalia, that 'interspersed among inarticulate ut-
terances would be actual identifiable words;'[5] and James Moffatt[6]
properly pointed to the parallel in the magical papyri of the second
and third centuries where incoherent ejaculations are mingled with
native and foreign titles of deities. Whereas Paul does not decry
ecstatic utterance, he finds higher evidence of the Spirit's activity in
moral behaviour.[7] Luke's account of Pentecost, while giving priori-
ty to xenoglossy, is coloured by the idea of ecstatic utterance, as in
the phrase 'tongues as of fire'. Perhaps he was working on two
separate and disparate versions.[8] It is noteworthy that he cites no
particular instance of xenoglossy beyond the statement that the
listening members of the Jewish diaspora heard the words in their
own language, that is, the language of the countries where they
then lived.[9]

II. *Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Sanskrit*

Cases which implicate the ancient languages are related variously
to the following methods of converse:

(i)   Direct converse with the spirits of the dead, though not without the presence of a medium.

(ii) Converse with them through an entranced medium.

(iii) Converse which usually involves the second method, but which invites the explanation that a previous life is being experienced again or at least reflected.

(iv) Converse through regressive hypnotism, often with the possible explanation, as in (iii), of reincarnation.

(v) Apparent regression through abnormal states such as delirium, though this does not necessarily involve converse with spirits of the dead.

In several reports the methods may be combined or alternated. A variant is provided by the instances where writing is said to be used, either directly or through a medium (cf. note 1).

In most cases the faculties of the medium or of the hypnotist are basic to the procedures. Linguistically they may recall the powers ascribed to the shamans, some of whom are said to use 'the language of spirits' during séances.[10] While the term 'secret language' is used of some shamanic chants and certain Indians of South America have honoured the power to memorize a song which 'rises from a stream',[11] the sounds are more often described as 'animal language' as they imitate animal cries, especially those of birds, thus implying that the shaman 'can move freely through the three cosmic zones: underworld, earth, sky.'[12]

Our concern, however, is with experiences which carefully discriminate between the variety of human languages and which relate to those of the ancient world. Prominent among English scholars of this century who have claimed such experiences is W. F. Jackson Knight (1895-1964), whose acclaim as an interpreter of Vergil rests mainly on his book *Roman Vergil* (London, 1944; 3rd Ed., Penguin Books, 1966) and on his prose translation of the *Aeneid* (Penguin Books, 1956, repr. 1970). At the end of his 'Acknowledgements' in the latter work he thanks Professor T. J. Haarhoff and adds, 'how authentic his direction has been must be left to appear hereafter,'—a reference to guidance by the spirit of Vergil, as other allusions make clear. Jackson Knight used to claim in lectures on Vergil that he was personally in touch with the poet's spirit.[13] He also claimed in his writings that he was in similar con-

tact with the spirit of Pythagoras. Since Vergil and Pythagoras do
not belong to the recently dead, this contact recalls the approach of
the syncretic spiritualism called 'Umbanda' which has been
popular in Brazil and which combines African traditions of spirit
possession with the modern type of spiritualism that has developed
in America and Europe.[14] It has been said of the Umbandists that
they differ from the tradition of western spiritualists in one marked
respect:

> Unlike the spiritualists of the western tradition, the Umbandists do not seek
> communication with the spirits of the recently dead. They seek instead the
> spirits of individuals long dead, whose lives have earned for them a blessed
> condition in the hereafter.[15]

While Vergil and Pythagoras certainly qualify for this noble
category, the Umbandists are not to be regarded as having in-
fluenced Jackson Knight.

Pythagoras was a sixth-century Greek from Samos who migrated
to the Greek city of Croton in Southern Italy. Verbal contact with
his spirit would therefore, one presumes, have meant using Greek.
The experience is described by George Wilson Knight in his
biography of his brother Jackson Knight.[16] There were, it seems,
two communications, each made possible by a medium, neither of
whom had any knowledge of ancient history and philosophy. The
first medium is said to have stated, 'I see Greek buildings. No, I
think they are Roman buildings.' This is explained as alluding to
the role of both Greece and Italy in the life of Pythagoras. The
second medium is credited with the words, 'I am seeing a big snake
... it is a python. A python going ... Pythago ...' Jackson Knight's
comment was, 'Did Pythagoras really return? Have we now the
authentic ancient pronunciation of his name?' It is disappointing
that nothing of the ancient Greek language comes into this. Nor is
the allusion to the name very enlightening.

According to the biography (p. 392) it was Prof. T. J. Haarhoff,
of Cape Town and later of Johannesburg, who introduced Jackson
Knight to Spiritualism, 'with an especial emphasis on messages
from Vergil, which he from time to time reported.'[17] Jackson
Knight once maintained that 'a spirit-world exists and has always
existed' and that 'all the races of mankind, including the Greeks
and Romans, have known this world by direct experience.'[18] Ac-

cording to the biography (p. 372 n. 1) one communication with Vergil, when Peter Mordue acted as medium, was based on the use of Latin; but the biographer hesitates to confirm the detail here, nor is the detail supplied. A letter of Jackson Knight is quoted (p. 380) referring to Vergil as 'the Supreme Poet himself who now seems to us to dictate Latin to Theo Haarhoff ...' A message from Vergil to Jackson Knight is thus reported (p. 382): 'When JK had difficulties with the Penguin people, V. said—let him give in on minor points—in the end he will triumph.' Sound advice, undoubtedly, but coming from so august a source it seems rather niggling and trivial. We are also told (p. 383) that Jackson Knight informed John D. Christie thus about the messages: 'Vergil sends many messages and now some reach me directly at Exeter, where he's told me to go slow and be extra careful with the second half'—words that invite a similar comment. Another reference (p. 383) is more detailed and also more imposing:

> Some instruction to work out of doors seemed to be supported by some paraphrase of *nulli certa domus: lucis habitamus apertis.* The references to the text, and the surprise of the medium at what she passes on, are regularly notable.

Clearly the converse is in Latin, and a difficulty with xenoglossy is that a medium is usually unlikely to find it easy to convey. Indeed Haarhoff is said to complain (p. 467) that 'the medium was unreceptive to any language not English or German ...' The 'paraphrase' to which Jackson Knight refers is of *Aeneid* 6. 673, where the accepted text has *nulli certa domus: lucis habitamus opacis*, with a quite different last word. It is the reply of Musaeus in Elysium to an enquiry concerning the whereabouts of Anchises, and Jackson Knight himself (p. 167 of his translation) renders the line, 'No one has a fixed home. We live in shady woods.' It seems that he explained the emendation made for the occasion by the spirit of Vergil to imply 'some instruction to work out of doors', meaning, it appears, work on the translation. Except in high summer, the advice would hardly suit the rigours of a northern climate.

Allusions have been made to the contacts claimed by Theodore J. Haarhoff with the spirit of Vergil. He had a life-long interest in the poet, as he shows in his *Vergil the Universal* (1949). We have already quoted Jackson Knight's dictum that Vergil 'seems to us to dictate

Latin' to Haarhoff. Other allusions indicate that Haarhoff usually employed a medium. A statement[19] by him goes into some detail:

> I always had my niece with me and she could see Vergil very clearly with his laurel crown, as he is at Mantua today—the famous statue. She has just recalled (in a letter today) how vivid and living Vergil was to her. This is quite genuine. Then V. would write replies to JK's questions in Latin ... Unfortunately I have not got the actual script of the writing here, but I may be able to bring the records from Johannesburg and send you specimens ... V. knew about JK and often referred to him as Agrippa.[20] He still does.

In reply to a question by John D. Christie ('Are they automatic writings[21] "received" direct by Haarhoff; or is there an intermediary?') Jackson Knight stated (p. 383 of the biography) that 'Haarhoff's Vergil communications came sometimes through a medium, sometimes through his own "automatic" script.' Perhaps the most impressive of the communications said to be received by Haarhoff is that which Jackson Knight conveyed to Richard Colledge:[22] '... he told me that Virgil had come through to Professor Haarhoff is a séance and has said among other things, "*Eram vere Platonicus*" ("I was certainly a disciple of Plato").' Here is a saying in Latin; and also one of substance. Vergil's debt to Plato is clearest in the last part of the Sixth Book[23] of the *Aeneid*, especially in the doctrine of reincarnation. In other ways the debt is less manifest.

A theory of reincarnation has certainly entered into several explanations of episodes in which various degrees of xenoglossy have been claimed. Some have been presented by Jeffrey Iverson in an account[24] of the work of Arnall Bloxham, a Cardiff hypnotherapist, who claimed that 'scores of his patients under hypnosis remembered and experienced a previous life, a previous incarnation on earth—and sometimes several.' Mr. Iverson produced for the B.B.C. a documentary film entitled 'The Bloxham Tapes'. One of the subjects was Graham Huxtable, a 'soft-spoken Swansea man' who had never been to sea, yet under hypnosis in 1965 he 're-lived' an episode when he was a gunner's mate on the *HMS Aggie* at the end of the eighteenth century; answering the hypnotist's questions about this experience, he still used English, but in 'a much deeper tone and a strong South-of-England country accent,'[25] and with much naval slang. Only two cases in Iverson's dossier are concerned with the ancient world. Beata Lipman (p. 24) recalled 'a life as a farmer's daughter in Ancient Greece'. Little of linguistic in-

terest is recorded here apart from the name of her Greek husband—Aremius, a name which duly occurs.[26] One of the seven previous lives recalled, it is claimed, by a young woman called (pseudonymously) Jane Evans, was that of the wife of a Roman tutor, Titus, in third-century York in Roman Britain. It is only in the names of persons and places that Latin is used in this account; the woman is Livonia and York is Eboracum; Boulogne is Gessoriacum, St. Albans is Verulam (= Verulamium), and London is Londinium; in addition the term *Domina* is used of Helena, mother of Constantine.[27] It has recently been shown, however, by Ian Wilson, following Melvin Harris, that a historical novel by Louis de Wohl (*The Living Wood*, 1947, repr. 1960 as *The Empress Helena*) is the undoubted source of the 'regression' by Jane Evans.[28] Most of the details are the same, including even the short form 'Verulam' for 'Verulamium'. The novel must have made a deep impression on Jane Evans, for she gave a vivid recounting of its main events.

Cases of xenoglossy under hypnosis have been claimed by Ian Stevenson, Professor of Para-psychology in the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, U.S.A., but none appears to relate to an ancient language.[29]

Hebrew features among languages which Pentecostals claim to use through the aid of the Spirit. In Montreal in 1921 a fervent woman who was singing in her own home was overheard by a Jewish neighbour who asked her where she had learned such perfect Hebrew. 'She had been singing the song of deliverance in that tongue.'[30] Factors to be considered here are the coincidental presence of identifiable words (e.g. the Hebrew *Alleluia*) and the possibility of auditory illusion.

In 1905 at Houston in Texas, where Charles F. Parham had established a Pentecostal School, members were said to use 'twenty Chinese dialects', and others, it is claimed, were 'able to command the classics of Homer.'[31] On a par is the following claim:[32]

> At Mukbi in India, it was claimed that over a period of three years, 1905-1908, illiterate girls at an orphanage spoke and prayed in English, Greek, Hebrew and Sanskrit, all languages which they had never learnt.

Such reports are devoid of detailed evidence, and miraculous hearing rather than miraculous speaking may well be entailed.[33] A

French medium, Hélène Smith, produced remarkable feats of
speaking unlearned languages, including a cycle of utterances in
which Sanskrit terms were used.[34] Yet her feats probably exemplify
what Ian Stevenson calls cryptomnesic recitative xenoglossy,[35] in
which a subconscious and latent memory of words in a foreign
language becomes activated. That was clearly the situation of the
young woman who spoke Latin, Greek, and Hebrew during
delirium; for it was discovered that as a young child she heard her
foster father reciting to her parts of his favourite books in those
languages.[36]

In the early Christian centuries the monks of Egypt sometimes
claimed the ability to speak and read foreign languages. Thus
Pachomius prayed for the power to know the languages of men and
a written document was said to appear in his hand; 'and when he
read it he learned immediately to speak all languages.' See Violet
MacDermot, *The Cult of the Seer in the Ancient Middle East* (London,
1971), 371. A Greek source specifies the three languages bestowed
on one monk as Greek, Latin, and Egyptian, where the last-named
refers, presumably, to the ancient language as opposed to its later
Coptic form (see ibid.).

In 1634 the Ursuline nuns of Loudun were said to speak, when
entranced or possessed, Latin and Greek as well as Turkish and
Spanish. See Peter Underwood, *Dict. of the Occult and Supernatural*,
203-204; Colin Wilson, *The Occult*, 292; F. H. Wood, *This Egyptian
Miracle* (London, 1939), 18. Dr. Wood also refers to Laura Ed-
monds, daughter of an American judge, who in trance is said to
have spoken 'Greek fluently and correctly—a language she had
never studied.' Indeed, according to Nandor Fodor, *Encycl. of
Psychic Science* (London, 1933), 118, she could use nine or ten
languages, including Latin. Such claims cannot now, of course, be
assessed. On the other hand, although Helen Wambach, *Reliving
Past Lives. The Evidence under Hypnosis* (London, 1979), describes the
regressions of many persons into the period Before Christ,
xenoglossy does not seem to enter into her experience of them.[37]

III. *Ancient Egyptian*

In modern times xenoglossy has been attested with thorough
records and investigations, according to Ian Stevenson, only in
three cases:

(i)   An early report by Charles Richet in his 'Xénoglossie' (*Proc. Soc. for Psychical Research*, 19, 1905-1907, 162-194).

(ii) The Rosemary Records published by A. J. Howard Hulme and F. H. Wood.

(iii) The 'Jensen Communications' presented by Stevenson himself in *Xenoglossy: A Review and Report of a Case* (University of Virginia Press, 1974), a case which concerns a Philadelphia housewife of Jewish parentage who under hypnosis achieved responsive xenoglossy in Swedish.

Later studies by Stevenson are mentioned by Ian Wilson, *Reincarnation*, 249 f.; Cf. n. 29 above.

The second case cited above relates to Ancient Egyptian. Here the central figure is Rosemary. She was Miss Ivy Carter Beaumont (1883-1961), for many years a schoolteacher in Stanley Mixed School, Blackpool, and a next-door neighbour in Hornby Road of Dr. Frederic H. Wood. During 1955 she and Dr. Wood, together with five students of psychic research, were planning a visit to Karnak, Thebes, 'to carry out research into the ancient language' and also to consider 'implications such as the theory of reincarnation.'[38] It was more than twenty years earlier, however, that Rosemary's Egyptian experience began. She had claimed in 1931, in a state of partial trance as a medium, that she had previously lived in Ancient Egypt as a temple-dancer and assistant called Vola in the reign of Amenophis III of the Eighteenth Dynasty (1402-1364 B.C.). The claim is coloured by some complexities. Although she lived in Egypt, Vola is said to be of Syrian origin. She spoke the language of Egypt, but often the real speaker is identified as Rosemary's spirit-guide, Telika-Ventiu, or Telika of the Fenkhu. This person is described as a Babylonian princess who became a consort of Amenophis III. The xenoglossy conveyed from these sources was recorded over a period of six years on gramophone records under test conditions supervised by the Society for Psychical Research.

There are complexities too in the relationship of the two principal interpreters. The first, Dr. Frederic H. Wood (1880-1963) held a doctorate in music of Durham University and was the organist and choirmaster at Blackpool's Church of St. John Evangelist; he was occasionally a respected adjudicator in music at the National Eisteddfod of Wales. It was the sudden death of his brother in 1912

that brought him to spiritualism and to co-operation with Rosemary as a medium.[39] When the Egyptian association became apparent, it was natural that the xenoglossy should be approached as a possible transmission of Egyptian. Although an ardent spiritualist, Dr. Wood was now coming to a difficult terrain where he had recourse to another spiritualist who professed a knowledge of Egyptology. This was Alfred J. Howard Hulme of Brighton (1870-1951), who had been an art teacher and curator of Lord Lever's art collection with its small group of Egyptian antiquities. He had added Hulme to his original surname Howard after possibly marrying into the Hulme family, this being Lady Lever's maiden name. What is mysterious is the 'Hons. Cert. in Egyptology, Univ. of Oxford' which follows his name on the title-page of the volume *Ancient Egypt Speaks. A Miracle of 'Tongues'* (London, 1937) after the name of Frederic H. Wood. There is no evidence for his membership of the university nor for the existence of such a certificate. Probably he had studied Egyptian privately in connection with his museum work.[40]

Before his collaboration with Howard Hulme, Dr. Wood had published two small collections relating to the material.[41] But *Ancient Egypt Speaks* was the first treatment of the linguistic side, and a note under the 'Contents' states that Howard Hulme is 'the sole author of Chapter V ('The Linguistic Evidence') and of Appendix I and has prepared the hieroglyphs, Egyptian transcriptions and translations throughout the book.' The material was repeated, with considerable additions, in *The Egyptian Miracle, or The restoration of the lost speech of Ancient Egypt by supernormal means*, by Frederic H. Wood (London, The Psychic Book Club, 1939) and in a book of the same title by the same author published in 1955 (London, John M. Watkins). Several notes were added in this version. It is noteworthy that after *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, Howard Hulme disappears from the co-authorship, although there is still a dedication to him. It is not entirely clear why this happened.[42] In 1959 Dr. Wood presented an elaborate typescript to the British Museum, entitled *The Speech of Ancient Egypt. Dynasty XVIII (circa 1470 B.C.)* with a prefatory note that 'this volume was lent by the Author to his friend Rupert Gleadow, M. A. Oxon. (Egyptology), 33 Cheyne Walk, London, S.W. 3, in October 1956, following a letter from Mr. Gleadow

(then a stranger) to the author, after reading his book *This Egyptian Miracle* (John Watkins), 1955 Edition.' Gleadow's words are quoted: 'I consider you have proved your case'; and it is added that he had studied at Oxford under Professor B. Gunn. Undoubtedly this typescript is the fullest source for the material.

Rupert Gleadow must have been aware, at the same time, that his teacher, Professor Battiscombe George Gunn, bad taken a quite different view of the claims. Certainly this argues for Gleadow's independence of mind, for Gunn was a demanding teacher who maintained a close and exacting relationship to his pupils; and here I speak from personal experience, having attended his lectures in 1937-1939, and benefitted thereafter from his supervision of my doctoral studies. In 1937 Gunn contributed to the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, of which he was then Editor, a number of scathing remarks on *Ancient Egypt Speaks* by Howard Hulme and F. H. Wood.[43] The bantering levity of his tone is evident in his first sentence: 'Much have we heard lately about certain claims as to the recovery by "supernormal" means of the vocalization of Egyptian—a piece of news which hits us, if we may so express ourselves, just where we live.' Gunn refers to gramophone records 'of Egyptian thus resuscitated' played at a lecture in Oxford to which he had not been invited. The book talks of Nona's 'infallible use of Egyptian grammar', and Gunn quotes sentences where this is manifestly not so; he refers also to instances where Hulme has 'emended' the original utterances and where the 'Babylonian accent' of Nona may have interfered with the transmission of sounds. The reference to Nona's use of the Old Perfective as coming easily to a Babylonian, in view of the prevalence of the Accadian Permansive, invokes the eulogy 'a most happy observation.' After quoting an impossible sentence, *wnt ꜣw.ỉ*, 'It really is I', Gunn notes that Nona 'has vouchsafed over 900 such little gems of Egyptian prose', and he proceeds, with rather heavy irony, to laud the 'impressive technicality' of the exposition.

Gunn's scornful indictment ends with a few remarks on the description of Egypt, especially of Thebes, in the time of Amenophis III which Nona supplied in the many statements made by her in English. This point reminds us that the likely sequence in the meditations of Wood and Howard Hulme began with the *content*

of the messages. Since there was here a clear pointer to Egypt, the emergence of utterances in an obscure language was followed by a natural assumption that this language was Ancient Egyptian. In *This Egyptian Miracle*, 147, Wood relates how he challenged Gunn, on the occasion of Wood's second visit to Oxford, on March 8th, 1938, to an open debate. The challenge was declined, Gunn having said that he was 'not interested in mediumship' (ibid. p. 169). However, on July 14th, 1938, at the International Institute for Psychical Research, London, a record was made of a reply to Gunn spoken by Rosemary in Egyptian, the message being explained as that of Nona through the medium.[44] Later yet another challenge was issued to Gunn, to attend a meeting at the Oxford Psychic Centre on April 13th, 1944. Although he again declined, this time he asked me and his son, Mr. Ian Gunn, to be present, hoping to receive from us a detailed report.[45] It would be fair to add a *caveat* that we could scarcely be regarded as unprejudiced observers. The meeting began with a few remarks by Dr. Wood, who presided throughout. He then introduced Rosemary, the key personality of the night's business. After referring briefly to her work as a medium, he explained that she was interested, like himself, in music and invited her to sing two songs. This she did in a pleasing soprano voice and she was accompanied by Dr. Wood on the piano. Then followed an eloquent address by Dr. Wood. He referred witheringly to Professor Gunn's failure to accept his challenge: 'That piece of field artillery has been too nervous to take the field.' The prospects in the Second World War then engaged his attention; if the Allies were now proving successful in North Africa, the true explanation should not be ignored: spirit-influences from the Pyramids of Giza had been the decisive factor. Returning to Rosemary's revelations, he then played one side of the record she had made on July 14th, 1938. The voice was in a low monotone with frequent intervals of silence. While this statement was being listened to, we were invited to follow it on a printed sheet which had been distributed to the whole audience and which included a translation of the greater part. After this Dr. Wood invited questions, explaining that his long concern with the affair had made him conversant both with the history of Ancient Egypt and its language. I ventured to ask two questions. In the first I raised anew the objec-

tion mentioned by Gunn in his editiorial remarks of 1937 when he queried the description of Thebes in the time of Amenophis III, 'with people travelling in tents on camels' backs.'[46] Why was it, I asked, that neither representations nor texts of the period referred to camels? Dr. Wood had naturally given thought to this objection before this. He stressed that our sources were incomplete; that the Bible (Gen. 12. 16, with asses) mentioned Abraham's use of camels in Egypt; that Rosemary had insisted that the Egyptians, while they did not use camels in the cities, made them the normal means of transport in the desert. In fact there is sporadic evidence for the use of the camel in predynastic and early dynastic Egypt; but it was not commonly used as a beast of burden until the Ptolemaic era, although it appeared with Assyrian armies in Egypt in the seventh century B.C.[47]

Turning to the philological claim, which included the assertion that the whole experience had brought to its chief exponent a familiarity with the ancient language of Egypt, I invited Dr. Wood to translate the simple sentence, 'It is a fine day.' His reply was *sw nefer hara*, which he then corrected to *sw hara nefer*. Here the corrected word-order is acceptable, but not the initial Dependent Pronoun as subject.[48] One would expect *hrw nfr pw*.[49]

If we examine the printed sheet distributed at the 1944 meeting, we see that it corresponds, for the most part, to the reverse side of the record as presented in *This Egyptian Miracle* (1939), 191-194. In the book many words bear acute accents to indicate stress, while others bear the circumflex to indicate a long vowel. The printed sheet, reproduced herewith, omits all accents, and it shows other minor changes such as providing Dr. Nandor Fodor's full name in L.T. 1185 (L.T. = Language Test). For 1188 the book has ʿ*efn gerra*! ... has chosen to run away!' which now becomes 'has reckoned (the case) a falsehood!' The revised version clearly points to *grg*, 'falsehood' in spite of the missing *g* at the end. For 1193, *di a efan a(r) naza* ... the version 'I give these (statements) to tally (for reference)' becomes 'I give these (statements) for future reference'. At 1194 the book adds after 'to place on record' an explanatory 'lit. "put in a box"' which is now omitted. Other variations are slight. The surprising reference in 1199 to a 'gramophone record (lit. "plaque")' involves a word *af*, whereas the initial word *soot* is

Oxford Psychic Centre, Thursday, April 13, 1944.
Lecture by Dr. F. H. Wood (Blackpool) on
Modern Links with Ancient Egypt.

During the lecture a gramophone record will be played of a statement in the language of Ancient Egypt, spoken by Telika-Ventiu (the Lady Nona) through Rosemary, on July 14, 1938, under test-conditions at the International Institute for Psychical Research, London.

On the first side of the record Nona explains (in Egyptian) her intention to restore this 'dead' tongue by adding its hitherto unknown vocal element to the hieroglyphic knowledge rediscovered by scholars in the past hundred years. The full translations, made by the lecturer, are published in his book, **This Egyptian Miracle** *(Rider)*.

Those of the reversed or second side of the record are here printed opposite their Egyptian equivalents, which the audience will hear as they were spoken by Rosemary in Partial-trance. The phrases are numbered according to their sequence in the Nona-Rosemary Xenoglossy, which now totals over 3200 similar language-tests.

1183. esti needa teen.   Take charge of this statement.

1184. don zeema. Khena...   Cause to be published the facts. Ask...

1185. Doctor Fodor...   Dr. Nandor Fodor (Research Officer at the Institute)...

1186. ...va na (h)estee.   ...to carry (retain in his possession) these records.

1187. arooma, eest...   A responsible man, lo,...

1188. ...ef-n gerra !   ...has reckoned (the case) a falsehood !

1189. esti needa !   Make a note of it ! (lit. Take charge of the statement !)

1190. di a hed an veen...   I will cause defeat of this (statement)...

1191. ...voo f eiran !   ...that *he* made !

1192. di zong-tee a(r) gua la.   You will keep an account, in order to refute calumny.

1193. **di a efan a(r) naza...**   I give these (statements) for future reference,

1194. di zena...   to place on record...

1195. ...erra gont-ee...   ...and make angry (literal translation)...

1196. ...oona. A zeena !   ...the mistaken man. Make a copy ! (Imperative.)

1197. vee nee (h)esta. A-doon !   Testify of the report. Cause it to be done !

1198 zeest a(r) neentee.   You are to write about these things.

1199. soot af eiran...   It is a gramophone record (lit. 'plaque') made by...

1200. ...eenst---eenstitute :   ...the Institute :

1201. nesa(t) a(r) ges-ta : oo fees ;   under the seal of the Institute : it is hers ;

1202. oo fees af eiran natee...   It is her (Rosemary's) record, made to vanquish...

1203. gesa qu antee di veen a nee efan aroont.   uncertainty, and to attack that which has been testified, indeed, of this, to that effect.

1204. Teka !   Look out !

1205. angsee veen a !   There will be retribution for this, indeed !

1206. di see pef ar ent.   Let his come by evidence, (lit. 'by something yet to be brought.')

1207. nas tiya (h)oona !   Name, forsooth, the mistaken man !

1208. a(r) hooma veen...   Verily, this gramophone disc (lit. 'circular object')...

1209. ...vee-st--ee...   ...it will carry it and...

1210. ver n ant !   ...see to that !

1211. o (h)esta di kon.   Let this report be amplified.

1212. 1213. Lekha ! Lekha di deen !   Be wise ! Let understanding be given !

1214. 1215. Asee f oon ? a(r) vesti di f eiran ?   What was it ? the report he made ?

1216. Vessta !   A mere bite, indeed !

1217—1222. arooma---arooma di Gunn oo-e-ga ! Asa ! asa fon toot a(r) feren deen istia Gunn !

1223. Kon !   Cease now !

N.B. 1217—1222 contain a forecast relating to our Oxford critic, Professor Gunn. Out of consideration for him, the translation must be withheld until it has been fulfilled. F.H.W.

described in Dr. Wood's Glossary (p. 227 of the book) as the 'Old Independent pronoun'. The revised version becomes more aggressive at 1204, 'See' becoming 'Look out!'; and 'this retribution indeed' (1205) becomes 'There will be retribution for this, indeed!' As for the untranslated 1217-1222, Wood's own system suggests the following version: 'A responsible man—a responsible man will cause an humiliation for Gunn. Watch! Watch this! You will then be brought to this, that is, you, Gunn!' In 1222 the revised form is *a (r) feren* instead of *a féren*, a future sense being probably intended.

A number of Egyptian words could be related to parts of the statement. Examples are *rmt*, 'man' (*arooma*, 1187; 1217); *grg*, 'falsehood' (*gerra*, 1188); the verbs *rdỉ*, 'give, cause' (often in the form *dỉ*) and *ỉrỉ*, 'do' (*eiran*, 1191, 1199 etc.); *hd*, 'attack' (*hed*, 1190; perhaps as a noun); *gwȝ*, 'strangle' (*gua*, 1192); *nỉs*, 'summon, reckon' (*naza*, 1193, 1207); *dgỉ*, or *dgȝ*, 'see' (*teka*, 1204); *ỉnỉ*, 'bring' (*ar ent*, 1206); *rḫ*, 'know' (*lekha*, 1212). The last word exemplifies a puzzling feature of some of the correspondences—the use of *l* for *r*, as in *oo-êl* for *wr*, 'great' (p. 94 of the book). A. de Buck had commented adversely on this trend.[50] Yet the Czech Egyptologist F. Lexa[51] stated that 'the medium certainly uses phrases which are Egyptian;' and the above sample confirms his view.

It is when we turn to other aspects of the language, to morphology, syntax and idiom, that the impression is disturbing. In morphology the vocalization, now so freely supplied, is a question-begging matter. But the consonantal variations are bewildering. Apart from the case of *r* and *l*, mentioned above, the treatment of *p* is especially difficult. Occasionally, we are told, it retains this sound, as in *pa* (Definite Article) and *pef* ('that'); but more often it is *v*, and sometimes *f*; thus the word *pw* is pronounced *voo*.[52] That *s* and *z* become interchangeable can be easily accepted; also that the sound *š* can be merged in these. But rather distressing are the matters concerned with syntax and idiom. The brevity and simplicity of the sentences are instantly apparent, a feature defended as being 'characteristic Egyptian' and as 'probably easier for Nona to dictate';[53] the second point might clearly be valid, but not the first. Syntactically the sentences are usually very thin, and much is built on the verbs *(r)dỉ* and *ỉrỉ*. Word-order is often irregular, as in *arooma, eest*, 'A responsible man, lo' (1187), where the second word (= *ỉst*) would normally come first.[54]

The phase of the language purported to be present in these say-
ings is that of the Eighteenth Dynasty in the reign of Amenophis
III.[55] Middle Egyptian is thus implied, although some Late Egyp-
tian usages might then be coming in.[56] Wood[57] emphasizes that the
claim concerns 'the *spoken* language of the people of Egypt' in the
period specified. A striking instance of a Late Egyptian word is *been*,
'No!', as in L.T. 30, *Been! Been!*, 'No! No!,[58] This word is not used
in Middle Egyptian,[59] where *nn* and *n* are the common negatives,
and these too are represented in the Rosemary files—by *een*.[60] In-
deed, according to Wood's latest statement[61] *een* and *eena*, which
correspond to *n* and *nn*, are 'fairly frequent in the xenoglossy',
while the *been* (= *bn*), over which Hulme[62] enthused so much,
seems to be a *hapax leg.* Since *bn* appears for the first time in texts of
the Eighteenth Dynasty,[63] a plausible point was made by Hulme
therefrom (p. 86 of *Ancient Egypt Speaks*), arguing that the word
'doubtless was well established in the vernacular before it became
acceptable for documents and inscriptions.' The xenoglossy claims
to represent colloquial usage, and one would expect, in view of this,
that *bn* would appear more often.

In the early stages of the study and presentation of the material
both Hulme and Wood made much use of *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic
Dictionary* (2 Vols., London, 1920) by E. A. Wallis Budge. Or-
thography has been clearly decided to a great extent by this work.
Thus, concerning *w* (quail chick) Wood[64] says that he agrees with
Budge that it 'should never have been transliterated "*w*".' Wood
uses *oo*, Budge *u*.[65] Yet in the typescript *The Speech of Ancient Egypt*,
Wood devotes Parts I and II to a detailed and laboured attempt to
relate the grammatical elements of the material to the doctrine of
Gardiner's *Egyptian Grammar* (1st Ed., 1927). Mention is made also
of the attitude of some contemporary Egyptologists, including
Gunn's scepticism and the statement by H. W. Fairman (see note
facing p. 6) that the 'transliterations were valueless because they
were not expressed in the International System of Phonetics.'
Wood's reply (p. 38) is that these symbols would not have been in-
telligible to 'ordinary readers' in the Commonwealth and America.
A sympathetic reaction by the Coptic scholar, W. E. Crum (ob.
1944) is noted (p. 8) as well as post mortem support from Budge;
also the complete conviction of Rupert Gleadow ('you have proved

your case') which has been mentioned above. On p. 2c Wood refers to Rosemary as 'Vóla, a Syrian girl brought by me—who am a reincarnation of Ráma, an Egyptian general who served *Amenhotep III*—to the royal palace at Thebes, during that reign'. Some further details of Rama are given elsewhere,[66] based on information supplied, it is said, by Nona and Vola; but of his own previous role Wood[67] says, 'I personally do not remember my Egyptian incarnation.' Nor does he contribute himself to the xenoglossy except in a few sayings reported by Nona and Vola.

One of these sayings is worthy of attention. On a certain occasion in Lower Egypt, Rama is said to have told Vola, while pointing to a yellow atmospheric phenomenon caused by wind blowing the sand: *Sy érra oof (h)êna! Sét a f (h)êna El Tám!* (= L.T. 1443, 1444.).[68] These sentences were later translated by Wood thus: '*It makes to burn therewith: I saw it* (lit. "looked to it therewith") *at El Tám.*' Several of the words used here can be quickly recognized as Egyptian: the Dependent Pronoun *sy*; the verbs *ỉrỉ*, 'do' and *sty*, 'look at' (*Wb.* IV, 332); and the preposition *ḥnˁ*, 'together with'. The *a* which follows *sét* is regarded as the preposition *a(r)* = *r*, 'to' (see Glossary in *This Egyptian Miracle*, 219; cf. p. 96). The verb *oof* is harder to trace. From the phonetic guide it should represent *wp*; and it seems that *wbd*, 'burn' (*Wb.* I, 297) is the nearest one can get. There are several problems. Beginning a sentence with a Dependent Pronoun (*sy*) is contrary to usage, but it will be recalled that this was a feature of the extempore translation of 'it is a fine day' and therefore of Wood's understanding of Egyptian; and it occurs several times in the material (L.T. 242; 404; 517; 1443; 1446), as Wood[69] himself notes. Indeed he roundly declares that 'Gardiner is wrong in saying that they (Dependent Pronouns) can never stand at the beginning of a sentence', adding that 'Mostly, however, they *are* found later in the phrase.' Again, the use of the preposition *(h)êna* in both sentences is strange; it does not govern a noun or pronoun and it is apparently given an instrumental meaning not found in normal usage. *Sét*, 'I looked', has neither a suffix pronoun nor an indication of tense. As for *El Tám*, this is a truly amazing locution. It lacks a preposition to denote place, and it introduces an Arabic definite article into what is intended to point to an Ancient Egyptian place-name.

A curious feature of pronominal usage in this material is the comparative prominence of the Independent Pronoun in a way that seems archaistic. In a general description Wood states that 'the so-called Independent Pronouns (Gardiner, 53) are rarely used—some not at all—but the Old Egyptian types were still occasionally used in Nona's day.'[70] Elsewhere[71] he says that the occurrences 'are interesting as survivals from the speech of the Old Kingdom into Nona's period', and refers to two examples in the text reproduced above—'*Toot*' ('thou') in L.T. 1222 and '*Soot*' ('she' or 'it') in L.T. 1199. The latter context is *Soot af éiran...*, translated 'It is a gramophone record (lit. "plaque") made by ...' Here, incidentally, the word *'f* seems to derive from (or correspond to) *'p*, 'the winged disk' (Budge, *Dict.* 118b; cf. *'pj, Wb.* I, 179). Three further instances of the Independent Pronoun are later noted:[72] L.T. 672; 716(e); 1096. The first of these is *F-oo eénk*, 'It is I,'[73] with a note that *F-oo* is 'possibly a form of 'Voo', so that Egyptian *pw* is indicated.[74] But the word-order is instantly suspect, for *ỉnk pw* is expected. In any case, what is clear about the occasional use of Old Egyptian forms is that it is quite at variance with the claim that a colloquial type of language is here represented.

A similar comment is invited by the use of the Old Perfective, which appears excessive for this stage of the language. It was Hulme who was guilty of the folly of calling the Old Perfective 'a quaint style of almost prehistoric age',[75] while at the same time defending its use by Nona, a Babylonian, as coming easily from her familiarity with the similar Akkadian permansive—a similarity noted by Gardiner in § 309 of his *Grammar*. One is disposed to wonder whether the form *'nḫ-tỉ*, 'may she live!', stated also by Gardiner, § 313, to occur after the names of queens and princesses, is not the source of Nona's Old Perfective *Ah-yóungk-ti-a*, which Wood[76] provides with an alternative rendering 'May *you* live!', averring that he is 'quite sure' that his recording is 'the more correct Egyptian version'. He reminds us too that Nona was an Egyptian queen and Vola a Syrian princess, so that the salutation could properly be applied to them. Any suggestion that the prominence of the Old Perfective is an archaistic throw-back is rebutted, for 'according to Nona, it was a colloquial idiom used by all Egyptians, but chiefly among intimate friends.'[77]

At this point it is fair to note that the tone of Wood's *Speech of Ancient Egypt* is far superior to that of his published works. Gone are the rather puerile polemics which mar those works in the face, admittedly, of some provocation; instead we have a conscientious attempt to square the findings with Gardiner's description of classical Middle Egyptian. Part III (pp. 80B-137) is entitled 'The Nona-Rosemary Language-Tests' and these are said to have been copied from 'the manuscript Rosemary Records, now running into forty four volumes'; but only one-fifth of the vocal material available for discussion is included here. When hieroglyphs are added, they are respectably drawn save for the vulture (aleph) which looks more like an enlarged quail chick. The tests are typed as they were recorded, in their sound-values only, and they are placed in numerical order. There are some gaps, however, especially between L.T. 4091 and 4599, where over 500 phrases are omitted. Nor is the 'Second Institute Record', part of which we have reproduced above, included. Stress is laid again (p. 80B) on the claim that 'these Language-tests are *colloquial* Egyptian.' In view of this it would be clearly wrong to expect any close correspondence to the grammatical forms of written texts. In many modern languages, such as Arabic, there is a big gulf between the literary and spoken forms, and regional differences are more evident in the latter.

A puzzling feature, even so, is the mingling of forms deriving from different phases of the language. Mention has already been made of the occasional appearance of pronominal forms found only in Old Egyptian. In this area it is the suffix pronouns that often seem conspicuous by their absence although they could be expected commonly to end a verbal form. We are assured by Wood[78] that 'the Suffixes are fairly frequent, though not so easy to detect, sometimes.' Seven examples are collected elsewhere[79] with the plausible explanation that they are fused, in Nona's speech, with the verbal form. But difficulties arise. Thus Rama is once said to have consoled Vola with the words (L.T. 1045) '*Ti-héem*! *Ti-héem*, *Fóree*!' ('There, you are crying, little flower!').[80] One is invited to relate the verb to *tehem* (Budge, *Dict.* 841b, 'cry out', not found in *Wb.* unless *thm*, V, 322, 7, of the Nile's moistening the land, is akin). No personal suffix, however, appears; and 'there' is a

charming ploy to avoid the repeated clause. As for *Fóree*, 'little flower' (? = Budge, *Dict.* 259b *fai*, 'kind of plant', cf. *Wb.* I, 574, 16), one might expect the second syllable to be explained as the suffix pronoun, thus giving 'my little flower'. In the sentence L.T. 814, *Yêta Amoon! Yén a(r) hés Tee* ('Father Amoon! We come to praise thee!'),[81] the suffix pronoun would be normal as the object of an infinitive (*r ḥst.k*; Gardiner, *Gr.* § 300), but the Dependent Pronoun here (*Tee = tw*) does occur (§ 301). It is not clear what verb is intended in L.T. 1169, *vée nee zóo*, 'testify of him',[82] but the preposition and pronoun are both aberrations; *ḥr.f* (with the suffix pronoun) would be expected.

In the use of the Articles and Possessive Adjectives the material veers from time to time from Middle Egyptian to Late Egyptian. Of the examples found of Old Egyptian pronominal forms Wood states that 'they are clearly survivals of Old Egyptian into Middle Egyptian or even Late Egyptian, if Nona be placed as Late Egyptian.[83] Whereas Middle Egyptian does not normally use Articles or Possessive Adjectives, Late Egyptian develops *wᶜ* as an Indefinite Article and *pȝ* as the Definite Article with *pȝy.f* etc. as a Possessive. The material, in view of the dating argued for it, can hardly be faulted for mixing the modes. Wood's Glossary gives *pa*, 'this' (masc.) and in L.T. 34 a sentence *Pa a séeman* is rendered 'This indeed is established,'[84] where *a* is explained as a 'particle' = 'indeed' and *séeman* (= *smn*) taken presumably as one of the ubiquitous Old Perfectives. In L.T. 1202 (given above) the sentence *oo fées af* (= *ἰw pȝy.s ᶜp*), 'It is *her* gramophone record,' the possessive adjective is defensibly used, but the subject pronoun is missing as well as the *m* of equivalence. In L.T. 742, *iw ê ténä* (= *ἰw.ἰ tnἰ*), 'I am ancient' or 'I am antiquity,'[85] there is the same preference for the Old Perfective in the first version, and in the second ignorance of the *m* of equivalence.

Much use is made of the Demonstrative Pronouns, but not much heed is taken of the question of grammatical agreement, as in L.T. 756, *äkh..ä²ntä* (= *ȝḥw.n tȝ*) ... 'Our spirit is this.'[86] In the record which replies to Gunn the forms *teen* (= *tn*) and *veen* (= *pn*) appear several times as independent Demonstratives without precise reference. Few relative clauses occur, but *ántee* (= *nty*) is used; otherwise very odd locutions emerge, as in L.T. 1190 f. (see above):

'I will cause defeat of this (statement) ... that *he* made' with *voo f eiran* (= *pw.f ỉr.n*) as the relative clause. Yet pride is taken in a few sophisticated points, as on the Akkadian Permansive. Nona is able to correct Hulme's pronunciation of the word for 'health' as '*Sneb*'; she says '*Şĕnêba*'.[87] It is also claimed[88] that the xenoglossy includes examples of the Prospective Relative Form discovered 'by our Oxford critic' (Gunn). One is L.T. 1182, *oo zén-tee oo ĕiran*, 'It will follow up (what) has been done.'[89] A misunderstanding of grammatical terms emerges here, for the alleged form (*zén-tee*), described as 'a fine example' on p. 249, is not even in a relative clause.[90] In the second and third editions of his *Grammar* Gardiner no longer accepted Gunn's formulation, although Hellmut Brunner in his *Outline of Middle Egyptian Grammar* (Graz, 1979), 38, retains it.

Parts of the material are classified by Wood[91] as 'bilingual xenoglossy', in which the English is supplied after or before the Egyptian. In some cases Vola's memories of Egypt, given in English, were interspersed with Egyptian words which were fully explained by means of descriptions. Other sayings are classified as 'relative xenoglossy'[92] because they are shown 'to bear some relationship to matters discussed with Nona'—clearly not a satisfactory demarcation since all the sayings are thus related in some way. What could have been much more important is the part of the sayings classified as 'responsive xenoglossy' which is rightly given priority in this whole field.[93] Successful research in this area obviously depends on the participation of expert speakers of the language such as Ian Stevenson was able to use in a case involving Swedish.[94] In the nature of things, that cannot be provided with the ancient languages, not even with those that have survived, such as Greek, in view of the many changes that have occurred. It is unlikely that any Egyptologist would have ventured to enter an encounter of this kind, except perhaps with a few prepared questions or statements in Egyptian. In the early stages of the Rosemary encounter Wood did not profess to know a single word of Egyptian. Hulme, on the other hand, made considerable claims. His efforts are set out in *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, and while they are liberally embellished with hieroglyphs, they do not impress. Wood devotes a whole chapter of *This Egyptian Miracle* to 'Responsive Speech' (pp. 156-169). The title is a little misleading since questions are often

put in English (e.g. 'Does your word '*Zeet*' mean "woman"?' to which the answer, in Egyptian, is '*Been! Been!*' 'No! No!', p. 157). Sometimes Nona was addressed in Egyptian and prompt replies were received, it is said, in the same language. But most of the questions and replies are in English, even when Egyptian words are discussed and used. Asked for a sentence with *mr*, 'love', in it, Nona replies (p. 161, L.T. 1089), *mêree doon a (r) zint*, 'love is raised above fear.' Here the verb *doon* seems to claim a connection with *ṯnỉ* or *tnỉ*, 'raise' (*Wb.* V, 374; cf. Gardiner, *Gr.* 601, where the construction with *r* is also noted; and *zint* might be related to *snḏt*, 'fear'). What is surprising, however, is that the subject precedes the verb, as in English;[95] perhaps an Old Perfective is again intended. In general, the harvest of the 'Responsive Speech' is very meagre.

At this point it should be made clear that the present writer has no experience of the processes by which communication with the spirit world is achieved. Rosemary's revelations are said to have been transmitted, for the most part, when she was in a state of 'partial trance' in which she was never entirely unconscious of what was taking place.[96] But allusion is made to a 'deeper trance' (p. 152) and to a state when the trance was 'very deep' (p. 252) which enabled Nona herself to be speaking. Linguistically the variations did not, it seems, lead to serious divergences, although the manner of transmission varied also. Mention is made of 'Nona's speed' and of her 'torrents of language'.[97] Yet a slow dictation speed is mentioned too[98] and this is explained as a deliberate act of control by Nona to allow effective recording. It was certainly true of the record reproduced above; the speaking was slow with many pauses. Difficulties are also said to result from what Nona called Rosemary's 'alien throat'.

There can be no doubt about the linguistic assessment of the material. Its vocabulary can often be recognized on a consonantal basis as Egyptian, but the structure of the language is, to a considerable extent, at variance with the accepted basic traits. The syntactical objections remain even when allowance is made for two arguable mitigations: first, that a mixture of Middle and Late Egyptian is implied; and secondly, that the material is essentially colloquial rather than literary in character. Admittedly we are ill informed about colloquial Egyptian at the end of the Eighteenth

Dynasty, so that a literary bias is inevitable in any verdict. There are two other possible mitigating factors in the evidence as presented: neither Nona nor Rosemary used Egyptian as a mother-tongue. Nona, the chief informant, first spoke Akkadian, a Semitic language; but she lived long enough in Egypt to learn its language, 'even if it be with a Babylonian accent.'[99] Not much play, it must be conceded, is made with these factors; Nona's Akkadian is invoked mainly in defence of her addiction to the Old Perfective.

The documentation compiled by Wood has naturally evoked some admiration. Thus Ian Stevenson, after remarking on the 'scanty documentation' in most of the cases described by Bozzano in his *Polyglot Mediumship (Xenoglossy)*, states that 'the evidence developed by Wood ... seems rather impressive' and expresses a hope that the material will receive the further study by an Egyptologist that, in his opinion, it deserves.[100] The present analysis has produced, as we have seen, a result with two disparate features. Lexically a good deal of Egyptian has emerged; but syntactically there is a serious lack of sound structure. If we ask what is the source of the Egyptian vocabulary, we face two main possibilities: either it is a genuine transmission from an ancient source which for various reasons has been diverted from the norm of accepted usage in several ways; or it is basically a modern production. When the type of disparity revealed is considered, there is a *prima facie* case for favouring the second alternative. Clearly it would be easier to dig out suitable words from Budge's *Dictionary* than to use them effectively in acceptable Egyptian sentences; and Budge incidentally provides in his second volume (pp. 1067-1255) a generous 'Index of English Words' with detailed references to the *Dictionary*. Wood himself supplies, freely and honestly, a large number of word correlations in the *Dictionary*, though not, of course, with any implication of initial dependence. In this connection the general question of integrity arises. Ian Stevenson[101] was able to say, apropos of the case of Swedish xenoglossy recorded by him, that 'fraud seems most improbable from a careful examination of the character of the subject.' Neither Hulme nor Wood was known to the present writer; his one public encounter with Wood could not provide more than a superficial impression.

There is no need to assume an initial plan to mislead. The con-

tent of Rosemary's memories pointed clearly to Egypt, and it was
natural to test the xenoglossic interludes for evidence of Egyptian.
Hulme seems to have led in this, and apparent success with a few
phrases produced persistent efforts on these lines. Wood[102] refers to
'the great advance made in the medium's registering of Nona's
thought, between L.T. 1 and 1119;' and he adds that 'seven years
had intervened: years of steady development and constant experi-
ment on the part of the guides, and of patient effort on Nona's part
to make Rosemary a perfect instrument for her purpose.' Another
type of advance is also implied. As Wood took over from Hulme
and addressed himself to the task of learning Egyptian, it is clear
that the material itself improved, though it never reached a sound
syntactical standard. A comparison of Hulme's linguistic contribu-
tion to *Ancient Egypt Speaks* with the material in *This Egyptian Miracle*,
which is mainly Wood's work, shows an increase in confidence and
coherence. (I am referring to the treatment of the material). Some
other indicators point in the same direction. It is significant that
Wood in his extempore linguistic reply at the Oxford meeting in
1944 made an error of word-order which is also found in the record-
ed material. Further, the content of the riposte to Gunn makes it
highly suspect as a contribution by Nona. Its studied personal at-
tack savours entirely of the modern controversy of Dr. Wood versus
Professor Gunn, and the former was very probably the author.

In some ways Wood showed not a little literary talent. The whole
scenario of Nona and Vola and their sad end in a manipulated
boating disaster on the Nile has a certain attraction which is the
mark of a creative mind. After initial uncertainties the same mind
tackled the more difficult task of interpreting various obscure say-
ings as Egyptian and probably of composing many himself. In this
task he was said to be helped by two notable spirit-guides who had
themselves lived in Ancient Egypt and were native speakers of the
language. They had been learned scribes called Téeum Bátoo and
Asyámukêda, but were unable to get Rosemary to write good
hieroglyphs.[103] Nor had they been able, it appears, to correct the
many mistakes in the recorded material. The role of Rosemary in
the affair is, of course, vital. If she began her xenoglossy in a
language not easy to identify, it may be assumed that when Hulme
and Wood convinced her that it was Egyptian, a process of 'picking

up' some Egyptian from them ensued.[104] At a later stage it is likely that she memorized material fed to her before a recording. Since Nona and Vola and the two scribes were none of them English speakers, Rosemary was kept busy translating their messages. Yet Nona, it is claimed, could also communicate directly in English,[105] and this constitutes a subsidiary phase of xenoglossy in the case. It is noteworthy that Rosemary eschewed publicity. She was not allowed to deal with an invitation from an unnamed Egyptologist to explain a part of the Westcar Papyrus;[106] and Wood stated categorically that 'under no circumstances whatever, now, will I allow anyone to ''test'' Rosemary.'[107]

IV. *Conclusions*

(i) Pentecostal claims both ancient and modern are basically concerned with ecstatic utterance and not with xenoglossy. The modern claims have not been objectively recorded; often subconscious memory and auditory illusion have played a part.

(ii) Cryptomnesia is also evident in several of the claims relating to Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Sanskrit. The alleged communications with the spirit of Vergil concern two scholars, Haarhoff and Jackson Knight, who were well attuned to the poet's mind. If most of the messages are flimsy, one Latin saying through a medium is imposing—*Eram vere Platonicus.*

(iii) The Rosemary Case mainly involves Ancient Egyptian. At first the spirit communications in English suggested a previous life in Ancient Egypt. Then came xenoglossic messages which were explained by Hulme as Egyptian. Wood took over this task after learning some Egyptian himself. The resulting material contains Egyptian vocabulary, but is often astray in syntax. Eventually Wood actively contributed compositions to the material and the medium probably memorized them before recordings were made.

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¹ The term was first used by Charles Richet ('xénoglossie'). See Ernest Bozzano, *Polyglot Mediumship (Xenoglossy)*, tr. Isabel Emerson (London, 1932), 5-9, drawing a distinction between it and 'glossolalia'. He then presents four categories of xenoglossy: (1) cases obtained by speaking automatism and clairaudient mediumship; (2) cases obtained by 'writing automatism'; (3) cases obtained by 'direct voice'; (4) cases obtained by 'direct writing'.

² Ibid. 140-143.

³ Cyril G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* (Cardiff, 1981), Ch. II, 25-45. In the rest of the book he examines glossolalia in the present century.

⁴ Ibid. 25 the two terms are defined thus: glossolalia is 'unintelligible, non-cognitive utterance which may vary in sound from inarticulate to articulate'; xenoglossy is 'utterance in a foreign tongue, not known by the speaker and unlearned by him, but intelligible to those with knowledge of the language'.

⁵ Ibid. 36.

⁶ *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* (London, 1938), 213, as cited by Prof. Williams, ibid. 36.

⁷ Cf. R. Bultmann, *Primitive Christianity*, tr. R. H. Fuller (1956, repr. Fontana, Glasgow, 1960), 241.

⁸ H. Conzelmann and A. Lindemann, *Arbeitsbuch zum Neuen Testament* (2nd Ed., Tübingen, 1976), 102.

⁹ For an example of a modern interpretation on the lines of xenoglossy see Bryan Wilson, *Religious Sects* (London, 1970), 69-70, on a Pentecostal school in Kansas: 'Tongues were spoken by some of these students, and the claims grew that by the power of the Spirit they spoke in languages that they had never learned, but that others recognised as real languages.' Cf. id., *The Noble Savages* (California U.P., 1975), 70 ff.

¹⁰ Mircea Eliade (tr. W. R. Trask), *Shamanism* (London, 1964, repr. 1970), 96-97.

¹¹ Ibid. 97. Carib tradition honoured as the first shaman a man who, 'hearing a song rise from a stream, dived boldly in and did not come out again until he had memorized the song of the spirit woman ...'

¹² Ibid. 99.

¹³ Attested by the writer in Swansea (5 March 1963) in an address of great charm.

¹⁴ Bryan Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium* (London, 1973, repr. St. Albans, 1975), 112-114.

¹⁵ Ibid. 112-113.

¹⁶ George Wilson Knight, *Jackson Knight: A Biography* (Oxford, 1975), 427; cf. 463-464.

¹⁷ In a book posthumously published, W. F. Jackson Knight, *Elysion* (London, 1970), 9, G. Wilson Knight states in an Introduction that his brother's 'direct experiences in this field' date from 1950.

¹⁸ In *Folklore* 69 (1958), 236. Cf. his *Elysion*, 178.

¹⁹ Quoted in G. Wilson Knight, *Jackson Knight: A Biography*, 382. I am grateful to Dr. Hugh Price for lending me his copy of this book and also for helpful discussions.

²⁰ With reference, presumably, to Agrippa the military leader who was a close friend of Octavian (cf. the tribute in Vergil, *Aeneid*, 8. 682 f.) and not to the Heinrich Agrippa (1486-1535) who wrote the *De Occulta Philosophia.*

²¹ On this phenomenon see Peter Underwood, *Dictionary of the Occult and Supernatural* (London, 1978, repr. Glasgow, 1979), 45-47 ('Automatism').

²² *Biography*, 15.

²³ Cf. Jackson Knight, *Roman Vergil* (2nd Ed., London, 1944), 4: 'Plato ... firmly adopted a theory of reincarnation.'

²⁴ Jeffrey Iverson, *More Lives than One?* (London, 1976; repr. Pan Books, 1977).

²⁵ Ibid. 107.

²⁶ Only once: see Pape & Benseler. *Wb. der Griechischen Eigennamen* (1911, repr. Graz, 1959), 147 (Roman Imperial era).

²⁷ Iverson, op. cit. 47-59.

²⁸ Ian Wilson, *Reincarnation? The Claims Investigated* (Penguin, 1982; first publ. as *Mind Out of Time?* London, 1981), 233-237.

²⁹ Ian Stevenson, *The Evidence for Survival from Claimed Memories of Former Incarnations* (Tadworth, Surrey, 1961; repr. from the *Journal of the American Soc. for Psychical Research*, April & July, 1960). On p. 42 he distinguishes between 'recitative xenoglossy' and 'true responsive xenoglossy'. See also Ch. 3 in Ian Wilson, op. cit. 40-55 (on children with memories of past life) and 81-82 (on Americans who spoke, under hypnosis, Swedish and German, although they did not know the languages). Later works by Stevenson include *Twenty Cases suggestive of Reincarnation* (Virginia U.P., 1980) and *Unlearned Language. New Studies in Xenoglossy* (Virginia U.P., 1984), but I have not been able to see these.

³⁰ Cyril G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit*, 79, quoting G. F. Atter, *Rivers of Blessing* (Toronto, 1960), 33.

³¹ C. G. Williams, op. cit. 181 with refs.

³² Ibid., citing H. V. Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids, 1971), 101.

³³ C. G. Williams, op. cit. 182.

³⁴ Ibid. 187.

³⁵ Cf. n. 29 above.

³⁶ C. G. Williams, op. cit. 187 with n. 57, citing S. T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, 70 f. See the ed. by J. Shawcross (Oxford, 1907), I, 78f. Cf. the Greek remembered after fifty years in a case mentioned by Goethe to Eckermann: see Ian Stevenson, *Xenoglossy. A Review and Report of a Case.* (University P. of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1974), 2.

³⁷ One person (p. 159) related that she was 'helping to build something: the Great Pyramid?' But she said she had died in 483 B.C., thus betraying a curious sense of time.

³⁸ Reported in *The Sunday Express*, in an undated cutting, but probably of 1955 since Dr. Wood is said to have been then 74. See also Ian Wilson, *Reincarnation?* 24-30. Usually her identity was kept a secret, but the report cited shows that this was not invariably so. Ian Wilson, p. 28, misleads on this point.

³⁹ Cf. Ian Wilson, op. cit. 27.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 29-30, where Ian Wilson exposes the arrogance of his claim.

⁴¹ Frederic H. Wood, *The Rosemary Records*. First Selection. Manchester, Two Worlds, 1932. Id., *A Challenge to Sceptics*. Second Selection of articles on the Rosemary Records. Manchester, Two Worlds, 1933.

⁴² Ian Wilson, *Reincarnation?* 248 n. 6 may well be right in suggesting that 'Dr. Wood later in life came to recognize Hulme's deficiencies, learnt Ancient Egyptian himself and went on to accumulate 5000 of Rosemary's utterances which he regarded as authentic Egyptian.' Hulme, it should be noted, died in 1951, whereas Wood lived up to twelve years later.

⁴³ *JEA* 23 (1937), 123-124.

⁴⁴ See Ch. 13 of *This Egyptian Miracle* ('Nona Answers a Critic'). (Hereafter = *Miracle*.)

⁴⁵ In 1952 I wrote an account to the Welsh journal *Y Faner*, and I now give a brief synopsis.

⁴⁶ *JEA* 23 (1937), 124. The details were part of the 'Vola-memories', i.e. of Rosemary herself.

⁴⁷ See Beatrix Midant-Reynes and F. Braunstein-Silvestre in *Lex. der Ägyptologie*, III (1980), 304 f. Michael Ripinsky has argued that the use begins commonly in the early Ramesside era. ('It can be safely argued that by at least 1300 B.C. camels had been relatively well known as domestic beasts of burden in Egypt.') See his paper, 'Camel Dispersion and Domestication in Ancient Egypt', p. 10 of typescript (as yet unpublished) at the 3rd International Congress of Egyptology at Toronto, September 1982. The time he postulates is a little later than the lifetime of 'Vola'.

⁴⁸ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (3rd Ed.), § 44; Dieter Mueller, *A Concise Introd. to Middle Egyptian Gr.* (Lethbridge, 1975), 26; Černý and Groll, *A Late Egyptian Gr.* (Rome, 1975), 22-27 (p. 23, as subject only after the negative *bn*).

⁴⁹ *Hrw nfr* can also mean 'a holiday'. Perhaps *hrw nḏm* would be better, or *pt nfrt*.

⁵⁰ *Miracle*, 94, referring to a letter by A. de Buck in *Mensch en Kosmos* (Amsterdam). Cf. the names 'Telika' and 'Vola'.

⁵¹ Ibid. 181.

⁵² Ibid. 98-99.

⁵³ Ibid. 114.

⁵⁴ Gardiner, *Egyptian Gr.*, § 231. See however § 248 for the occasional examples when it follows a word. The normal position is shown in L.T. 5, *istia Vola*, 'Here is Vola' (p. 126) and L.T. 67, *Istia Véntiu*; also in L.T. 1222, *istia Gunn!*

⁵⁵ Hence the title *The Speech of Ancient Egypt. Dynasty XVIII.* (BM Typescript, 1959. Hereafter = *Speech.*) It was completed in 1956 and presented to the BM in 1959.

⁵⁶ Cf. John Ray's remarks in Ian Wilson, *Reincarnation?* 26, alleging that Hulme had often confused the phases.

⁵⁷ *Miracle*, 19.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 127.

⁵⁹ For its use in Late Egyptian see Černý and Groll, *A Late Egyptian Grammar*, 206-7.

⁶⁰ *Miracle*, 91. It is in a sentence which ends, not very convincingly, with *antee* (the relative *nty*) followed by *een*, '(to oppose) with one which is "No!"'

⁶¹ *Speech*, 43.

⁶² *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, 85 f. and 177.

⁶³ M. Korostovtsev, *Grammaire du Neo-Égyptien* (Moscow, 1973), 115, citing *Urk.* IV, 650. For *bn* in negative sentences see Sarah I. Groll, *The Negative Verbal System of Late Egyptian* (Oxford, 1970), 112 ff.

⁶⁴ *Miracle*, 93.

⁶⁵ Cf. his *Vocabulary of the Book of the Dead* (London, 1898), 73 ff.

⁶⁶ *Miracle*, 50-51; 55-57; 61; 64.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 138 n. 1.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 57.

⁶⁹ *Speech*, 8.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 7.

⁷¹ *Miracle*, 123.

⁷² *Speech*, 11-12.

⁷³ Ibid. 93.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Miracle*, 99 f.

75 Cf. Ian Wilson, *Reincarnation?* 25.

76 *Miracle*, 139. The Glossary on p. 200 gives it as *A-yúnkh-tia.*

77 Ibid. 182 n.

78 *Speech*, 7.

79 *Miracle*, 122.

80 Ibid. 55 f. with refs. to Budge, *Dict.* 841 and 9.

81 Ibid. 146.

82 Ibid. 123.

83 *Speech*, 12.

84 *Miracle*, 158.

85 Hulme in *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, 15.

86 Ibid. 47.

87 L.T. 550; *Speech*, 91.

88 *Miracle*, 113 f.

89 Ibid. 190; cf. 230.

90 Another 'fine example' on p. 147 is left untranslated. In the treatment of the Old Perfective or Pseudo-Participle there is a tendency to equate the form with the *tỉ* which occurs as an ending: see *Miracle*, 102 and 125; *Speech*, 7 and 23 ff.

91 *Miracle*, 53; 86; 116 ff.

92 Ibid. 115; 141.

93 Cf. Ian Stevenson, *The Evidence for survival etc.* 42.

94 Id. *Xenoglossy* (1974).

95 Wood was aware of the norm. See *Miracle*, 116: '... the verb usually comes first.'

96 Ibid. 32 f. Cf. *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, 18.

97 Hulme in *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, 87. Cf. Wood, *Miracle*, 36 ('the fluency of a living tongue' and 'many rapid "spates" of genuine Egyptian').

98 Wood, ibid. 30 f.

99 *Miracle*, 180.

100 Ian Stevenson, *Xenoglossy* (1974), 7.

101 Ibid. 88.

102 *Miracle*, 172. An example of the early follies is a phrase equated with *ỉfdt tȝw* (L.T. 50), 'a quartet is this', revised later as 'an acquiescent quartet' (= Nona, Vola, Hulme, and Wood). See *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, page facing Contents, and *Miracle*, 23 f.

103 *Miracle*, 172 f. and 180.

104 Gunn's suggestion in a letter to Wood, August 17, 1937. See *Miracle*, 164 n. 1.

105 Ibid. 33; 39 (in writing); 46 f.; 55f.; 69; 75; 86 (bilingual); 117; 204. She is said on p. 118 to use 'different vibrations' when transmitting English and Egyptian.

106 Ibid. 203 f.

107 Ibid. 165.

BOOK REVIEWS

SCHMITHALS, Walter, *Neues Testament und Gnosis* (Erträge der For-
schung)—Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1984, 9 +
194 pp.

Parallèlement à la vague, toujours montante, des publications philologi-
ques autour des textes découverts au lendemain de la 2ᵉ guerre mondiale à
Nag Hammadi en Haute Egypte, on peut constater la reprise, sur de nou-
velles bases, de certains grands thèmes familiers à la recherche d'avant
guerre. Le renouvellement des études gnostiques a permis, en effet,
d'apprécier à leur juste mesure les dimensions et les aspects divers du phé-
nomène gnostique dans l'histoire des religions de l'antiquité tardive.

Walter Schmithals, dont l'ouvrage controversé sur les opposants de
Paul *Die Gnosis in Corinth* date de 1956, vient de publier une étude concise
qui se propose de faire le point sur le vaste thème *Neues Testament und Gno-
sis*. Cet ouvrage ne se propose pas d'offrir une thèse nouvelle. Plutôt que
de présenter et d'étayer ses vues personnelles, l'auteur s'efforce de délimi-
ter les problèmes et de citer les différentes études leur ayant été consacrées
dans la dernière génération. L'introduction précise le problème hermé-
neutique: si les textes de Nag Hammadi, confrontés aux traditions rappor-
tées par les hérésiologistes chrétiens, nous permettent une vue plus balan-
cée des développements de la mythologie gnostique aux 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ siècles, ils
ne résolvent pas le problème capital des origines gnostiques, et plus préci-
sément de l'existence — et de la nature — de la gnose, ou "pré-gnose",
au premier siècle. Sur cette époque, en effet, nous n'avons pas de textes
gnostiques, et le N.T. reste notre source principale.

Le livre est organisé autour des deux principaux groupes de textes: le
corpus paulinien et le *corpus* johannique. Les grandes questions que pose le
premier sont connus: Qui étaient les ennemis de Paul, à Corinthe ou ail-
leurs? En quoi peuvent-ils être appelés gnostiques? Peut-on parler d'élé-
ments gnostiques dans la pensée de Paul lui-même? Quel est le milieu
dans lequel se développent les controverses des Epîtres aux Colossiens et
aux Ephésiens? Quant à la discussion autour du *corpus* johannique, il ne
faut pas s'étonner si elle tourne encore autour de l'œuvre classique et
magistrale de Bultmann sur l'Evangile de Jean et des questions qu'elle
soulevait.

Les autres écrits du Nouveau Testament sont tous soumis à revue, de
façon un peu fastidieuse. Pour compenser à l'absence d'une thèse,

l'auteur conclut par des *Ergebnisse*, qu'il soumet aussi sous une forme graphique d'une complexité assez effarante (p. 155). Le graphe postule, à l'origine de tous les développements néotestamentaires, deux pôles sans liens entre eux: Jésus et "gnose juive (Simon Magus)" (sic!). Un tel schématisme est désemparant, et la pauvreté des résultats ne justifie pas l'ampleur de la recherche, dont témoigne la bibliographie. Le lecteur est en droit de se demander si le problème lui-même n'est pas mal posé: c'est pour le théologien que le Nouveau Testament est un *corpus* bien défini, plutôt que pour l'historien.

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> *Explorations in Early Chinese Cosmology*; edited by Henry Rosemont, Jr.
> Papers presented at the Workshop on Classical Chinese Thought held
> at Harvard University August 1976; *Journal of the American Academy of
> Religion Studies*, Volume L, Number 2 — Chico, California: Scholars
> Press, 1984

Considerable progress has been made in recent decades in discriminating between the many varied strands of thought that are intermingled within the Chinese traditions, and it has been realised that Chinese philosophy is both more complex and more varied than had been appreciated formerly. The old habit of thinking in terms of monolithic systems such as Confucianism, Taoism or Legalism had indeed been encouraged by Chinese writers, who were only too anxious to set everything within its due place in a hierarchy; the comfortable habit had been accepted by early western observers who saw therein a means of comprehending the Chinese view of the orthodox and the heterodox. Closer inspection of the original documents and the recently found evidence of archaeology has now rendered so simplistic approach impractical. It is becoming possible to identify some of the fundamental questions that lie beneath early Chinese religious and intellectual activity, and to comprehend the principles from which such practices started, without forcing them to fit the straight-jacket of categories formulated much later.

The contributors to this volume address themselves to a number of questions that fall within the general term cosmology. As is usual, this expression covers a number of specialist interests. As the chapters of the book range over the 1200 years that preceded the start of the present era, it is hardly surprising that there is considerable diversity in the volume. The period with which these writers are concerned witnessed the continuous evolution of writing, the first formulations of Chinese thought and

the production of a variety of texts that were often intended primarily as guides to those who ruled over humanity. As yet there was still considerable experiment in Chinese ways of thought; the growth of the schools or the establishment of doctrine was by no means as precise or clear cut as has sometimes been made out; and the attempt to impose an orthodoxy by way of the imperial patronage of learning and education had hardly got under way.

David Keightley fastens on the Late Shang period (c. 1200-1050), whose inscriptions survive from mantic practice and constitute China's earliest written records. He shows how the Shang peoples saw the world and its activities as a series of phenomena, and believed that the significance of each one of these had to be discovered by means of divination. The changes in Shang practice reveal a shift from magic to religion, or from charms to prayers, and a reduction in the scope of divination itself. He suggests that the intellectual habits of the diviners of this early period may account for some characteristics of Chinese philosophy, such as the comparatively late development of metaphysics and the prescribed nature of ethics. It is even possible that the influence of the Shang diviners and their methods of questioning may be seen in the relative failure of Chinese thought to produce an analytical frame of mind. David Keightley sees a continuity extending from the mental and religious habits of the Shang kingdom to the well documented traditional practices and claims associated with Confucianism in the Chou (traditionally 1122-256) and Han (202-220 CE) periods.

James Hart moves forward in time to a text that describes the political machinations and incidents of the years 1000 to 500. In a passage of the *Kuo yü*, which refers to 549, he discerns a concept of an ordered universe that was patterned on the Yin-Yang scheme and embraced the worlds of Heaven, Earth and Man; but as yet there are no signs of two concepts that became essential in Han times, i.e. the attention paid to portents, and the explanation of movement and activity in terms of the Five Phases or Elements (*wu hsing*).

Of all Chinese texts that have been made available to the western reader, the *Book of Changes* (*I ching*) along with the *Tao-te ching* perhaps take pride of place as examples of China's quest for universal truth. They are also texts which have been subject to considerable manipulation and misapplication, and that have given rise to grave perplexity. Gerald Swanson examines the assumptions that lie behind the text of the *Great Treatise*, a component part of the *Book of Changes* that may date from as late as 200 BCE. He explains the meaning of certain basic terms that recur in this text, i.e. *pien*, alternation, *hua*, transformation, and *t'ung*, development; he sees a distinction here between ordered (or regular) and random

(or irregular) change. The term *i* (as in *I ching*) is used in two ways. In a non-technical sense, it refers to the world of nature, signifying a combination of the two processes of alternation and transformation; as a technical term, *i* combines the concepts of alternation and development, that form an integral element in divination by means of the hexagrams. Cyclical time imposes a limitation on these concepts, whether seen in the macrocosm of nature itself or in the symbols of the linear patterns. Time is a receptacle within which events occur; the interaction of events within time maintains the all important notion of position or rank.

The contributors to the workshop which gave rise to these essays included Vitali Rubin, a former member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. For many years he led the life of a refusenik, but eventually he was able to take up a post in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, only to meet an untimely death in 1981. It is to the memory of their colleague that the contributors dedicate their work. Rubin's main interests had always been with the development of political ideas, and in his chapter he discusses the links between the political theories of the Ch'in empire (221-207) and an explanation of the cosmos in terms of the Five Phases. This idea may be traced to Tsou Yen (c. 350-270), who unfortunately left no writings behind him. It is also derived from a well-known passage in the *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu*, which was compiled in the decades before the Ch'in empire was established.

John Louton cites the same passage in his attention to a more fundamental question that that book raises. There is an apparent contradiction between its explanation of the universe in terms of a constant cycle, and the realities of temporal change. He shows how the authors of the *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu* believed in the essential sequences of natural phenomena and the existence of a relationship between those sequences and human activities.

The passage which both John Louton and Vitali Rubin quote is in fact crucial to the development of the ideas of sovereignty in the imperial period. It draws a link between the powers of Heaven, the operation of the Five Phases and the function of strange phenomena as harbingers of change. It may be remarked that there is a further contradiction here in respect of political theory that perhaps deserves more attention than it has received; this is between the alternation of dynastic power in accordance with the succession of the Five Phases, and the specific bestowal of a mandate to rule on a worthy incumbent by Heaven. The contradiction is in the last resort between a mechanistic and an arbitrary view of dynastic power, the one being in accordance with universal principles and the other being based on moral considerations.

John Louton also calls attention to an apparent difficulty in reconciling other contradictory statements in the *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu*; for the references to the superior virtues of the past over the present are matched by arguments against the value of imitating traditional practice. John Louton's explanation of the difficulty may perhaps be supported by the recognition in other texts (e.g. the memorials of Tung Chung-shu c. 179-c. 104) of a clear distinction between the constancy of principle and the variety of expedient.

There are two contributions on the ideas of the *Huai-nan-tzu*. In the first of these, Jeffrey Howard sees the purpose of that compilation (completed by 139) as that of combatting a process of decline. Such decline was all too obvious in historical fact, and it was due to the failure of mankind to appreciate the unity of *tao*. A comprehension of that unity and its application may be achieved by an enquiring mind that is bent on investigation of the universe and its phenomena; and such investigation will itself demand a recognition of the subjective nature of human understanding. The *Huai-nan-tzu* shows the importance of those enquiries to a ruler of mankind; the work refers to historical evidence, mainly from the Spring and Autumn period (722-481), as material appropriate for investigation.

John Major examines the chapter of the *Huai-nan-tzu* that is specifically concerned with the topography and relationship of the different parts of the cosmos. While several earlier texts which refer to the nine divisions of the universe envisage a system of concentric rectangles, the *Huai-nan-tzu* portrays a different plan whereby the different zones are seen as a pattern of extruded squares. The schematic cosmography of the *Huai-nan-tzu* is closely related not only to the ideas and scheme of movement of the Five Phases, but also to two traditional diagrams, the *Lo shu* (Lo writing) and the *Ho t'u* (River chart). These are two magic squares, which may themselves be interpreted as symbols of two versions of the Five Phases' scheme of movement; the diagrams may also be explained in terms of numerology. The influence of the schematic cosmography that is set out in the *Huai-nan-tzu* may be seen in a wide variety of arrangements whereby man has attempted to infuse a sense of order into the material world (e.g. the 'well field' system of traditional agronomy; city plans; Mohist defensive warfare; or the designs of tombs). It is suggested that the same cosmic arrangement or map that is described in the *Huai-nan-tzu* is also depicted on that particular type of mirror, with characteristic TLV marks, that is in essence a symbol of eternal being and universal relationships. It may be remarked in this connection that although it could well be that the text of the *Huai-nan-tzu* and the design of these mirrors derive from the same view of cosmic reality, it is unlikely that the text specifically

describes such mirrors; characteristic examples of these were in all probability dated after the compilation of the *Huai-nan-tzu* had been completed.

It is thus clear that early Chinese thinkers had important contributions to make to an understanding of the universe. Their records show how they embarked on a search for the unknown by well tried esoteric methods, and how an intellectual approach came to dominate that of a visionary. In their concept of an ordered universe, Chinese philosophers were at times obsessed by the part played by change; attention to this aspect of reality perhaps corresponds to the intellectual effort devoted to time and motion in the traditions of the west. A further characteristic of Chinese thought may be seen in the pre-occupation with the proper place of sovereignty within a universal order. Closely associated with such questions was the need to balance the constancy of certain values against the process of historical change. In writing of the 'fall', early authors saw the difficulties experienced by man in accepting the demands of an eternal order and in restricting his own expectations accordingly. Such considerations are also seen in philosophers or mystics who explore the values of *tao*, or order of nature, along other paths. Possibly a further theme of Chinese cosmological thought may be discerned in the implicit love of hierarchies and regularity. This is seen in the patterns thought to inform the universe and duly imitated in human contrivances.

In presenting these contributions, made originally to a workshop that was held in 1976, the editor, Henry Rosemont, has carefully chosen articles that illuminate many of these fundamental questions. Of necessity the choice has to be limited, and readers who are new to sinology should not be led astray into thinking that Chinese thought of these centuries had no other interests. There remains considerable room for papers on other aspects of cosmology, such as creation myths; the occurrence of miracles; the interaction of the three estates of the universe; or the other world that lies beyond existence on earth.

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Korean Shamanism: recent publications:
Hung-youn CHO, *Mudang: Der Werdegang koreanischer Schamanen am Beispiel der Lebensgeschichte des Yi Chi-san*, Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens e.V. Mitteilungen Band 93 (Hamburg, 1983), 412 pp.;
    Alan Carter COVELL, *Ecstacy: Shamanism in Korea*, Hollym International Corp. (Elizabeth, New Jersey/Seoul, 1983), 107 pp.;

Alan Carter COVELL, *Shamanist Folk Paintings: Korea's Eternal Spirits*,
Hollym International Corp. (Elizabeth, New Jersey/Seoul, 1984),
112 pp.;

A. GUILLEMOZ, *Les algues, les anciens, les dieux: la vie et la religion d'un
village de pêcheurs-agriculteurs coréens*, Le Léopard d'Or (Paris, 1983),
318 pp.;

Laurel KENDALL, *Shamans, Housewives, and other Restless Spirits:
Women in Korean Ritual Life*, University of Hawaii Press (Honolulu,
1985), xiii + 234 pp.

Since last I wrote a review article about Korean shamanism (*Numen*
XXX, fasc. 2, 1982, pp. 240-264) several monographs on the subject have
appeared, some of which should not be overlooked by anyone interested
in Korean folk-religion. One would like to except the two books by Alan
Carter Covell, however. Both books are marred by a tendency to make
use of any fact that can possibly be construed to be related to shamanism,
as long as it serves to make the narrative more sensational. There are
many inaccuracies and no source references. These short books (in both
about half is made up or pictures, some of them quite interesting) are to
be appreciated as journalism rather than as works of scholarship. This is
true particularly of *Ecstacy*, but the more specialist *Shamanist Folk Paintings*,
too, is disappointing. Those interested in the subject would do better to
turn to the two articles by Gernot Prunner: ''Materialien zur
koreanischen Volkskunde I: Schamanistische Götterbilder im Ham-
burgischen Museum für Natur-und Völkerkunde'' 1 & 2, *Mitteilungen aus
dem Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg*, Vol. 7 (1977), pp. 101-144, and Vol.
8 (1978), pp. 117-150.

The other three books are all works of serious scholarship and offer im-
portant new material and new points of view. Hung-youn Cho has written
a life history of one male shaman, describing with a great amount of fac-
tual detail the religious experiences of this shaman, accepting them as
such, rather than regarding them as, for instance, expressions of abnor-
mal psychology or indicators of social tension. The individual life history
is given depth through copious references to existing literature and by the
author's experience as a field-worker. In fact Cho's book summarizes
(and frequently criticizes, without distorting the object of his criticism) a
great amount of secondary literature which is otherwise available only in
Oriental languages.

Laurel Kendall is an anthropologist who has made a radical departure
from the custom in earlier works of focussing attention on the shamans
and on their colourful rituals alone. To her shamanism is a relationship

between a religious specialist and the clients, and both parties are of equal importance. Laurel Kendall does not eschew ethnographical detail, using it to good effect. For example, in order to show what tangible and intangible benefits the women who patronize the shamans expect, she mentions such practical things as: it helps them to cope with fractious children and drunken husbands. Her interest in the clients of the shamans leads her to the discovery of specific religious traditions within certain households, such as have never, I believe, been described before. Kendall's book, moreover, is an important step towards the understanding of the division of roles between the sexes in Korean society, where the shamans are mostly women and serve the needs of women and men keep aloof from what they like to call "superstition" (without, it appears on closer inspection, fundamentally rejecting the premises of the beliefs of the women). Her sensitive examination of this problem adds considerably to previous treatments of the matter and traces the relationship between social organization (which gives women a bigger role in society than is sometimes assumed) and shamanism.

Once the focus shifts from the religious specialist to ordinary believers, the logical consequence is also to study their beliefs when these are not directly related to the activities of the shaman. Kendall, in fact, discusses several instances where ordinary women directly address the supernatural, without recourse to a shaman. In this respect Guillemoz' book, an ethnographic study of one East Coast village with the emphasis on religious matters, is of importance. None of the village studies published earlier devoted sufficient space to a description of the beliefs of the villagers. About half of Guillemoz' book is concerned with religion in one form or another; the activities of the shaman do figure in this, but not prominently. For a true picture of the role of religion in Korean life, studies like this one, written with great empathy and a fine eye for detail, are indispensable. One remarkable discovery made by Guillemoz is the fact that, contrary to the pattern that most researchers regard as typical for Korea, in this village there is no strong opposition between the beliefs of men and those of women. This adds further nuance to the picture of the respective roles of men and women presented by Kendall. At the end of his book Guillemoz proposes a study of shamanism based on an examination of the social roles and functions of its practitioners rather than on the personal experience of the shamans (initiatory illness, ecstasy etc.), a suggestion which merits serious consideration.

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COVELL, Jon Carter & Alan COVELL, *Japan's hidden history: Korean impact on Japanese culture* — Elizabeth, N. J. & Seoul, Korea, Hollym International Corp., 1984 $ 19.50

In this slender volume of one-hundred pages, the authors describe the Korean impact on Japanese culture from the protohistoric through the modern era. Such a task presupposes an understanding of and ability to synthesize a vast body of confusing and often conflicting historical, political, and artistic evidence. This subject, more than any other in Japanese and Korean studies, requires objectivity and well-rounded scholarship. All are lacking in this book intended, according to the dust jacket, "for popular consumption rather than the specialist's tedious reading."

Its authors are Jon Carter Covell, noted for her 1941 publication *Under the Seal of Sesshu*, reissued in 1975 (New York, Hacker Art Books) and more recently for *Zen at Daitokuji* (Tokyo & New York, Kodansha, 1974). Her son Alan Covell's only qualifications are that "having spent many years in Texas, [he] knows horses and their capacities as well as their weaknesses." (Dust jacket)

Part I, written by Alan Covell, examines Japan's early history in light of the controversial "horse-rider" theory. This theory, first elaborated by Egami Namio, has been a hotly debated topic among Japanese and western scholars alike. Covell, however, fails to mention his debt to Egami in either the text or the bibliography. Moreover, he reduces his complicated arguments to the assertion that the sophisticated civilization and technology of Japan's Tumulus Period (250-522 A.D.), so-named after the thousands of burial mounds built for clan chieftains during the period, are due to the islands' conquest by a cavalry led by a princess from the Korean peninsula. This princess, identified as Empress Jingu, and her lover, Takechiuchi no Sukune, he claims, founded the Japanese imperial line. Covell's presentation of this provocative thesis is sloppy and full of factual errors. Furthermore, his text suffers from a lack of editing. The following description of Takechiuchi no Sukune is typical of the author's prose style:

> Apparently his descendants taking the same name did become sort of hereditary Prime Ministers for a while. The Valiant Old Bear Lord was a veritable stud, starting the family lines of a number of clans which became potent in Japan's government. (p. 25)

Whereas Part I attempts a broad characterization of early Japan through sometimes questionable interpretation of historical sources such as the eighth century *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*, Part II focuses on Korean

elements in later periods. Particular attention is given the statuary of the Asuka era (552-645). Although Japan's indebtedness to craftsman from the Korean peninsula—painters, sculptors, weavers, tilemakers etc.—is both well-documented and always acknowledged by scholars of the period, Dr. Covell deliberately presents a distorted picture of the state of Japanese scholarship in the field of Buddhist sculpture. Her allusion to the pioneering work of Seiichi Mizuno (d. 1941) is a case in point.

> Professor Mizuno, like a host of others, sees Chinese art styles in Asuka objects (without reference to Korean influence), one must assume that these motifs came from China to Japan via a "flying carpet" since no boats were plying directly through the waters which separated the two countries. (p. 59)

This statement is both unnecessarily inflammatory and historically inaccurate as Japan was already sending missions to the Chinese court by 607.

Most of the major monuments of seventh century sculpture in Japan have been the subject of careful stylistic, technical, and documentary scrutiny that has resulted in major revisions in our understanding of early sculpture both in Japan and on the Korean peninsula. Kuno Takeshi, one of the foremost scholars in this area, has devoted much of the past decade to the study of this seminal period in Japanese sculpture. In his *Kodai Chosen to Asuka-butsu* (Ancient Korea and the Buddhist Sculpture of the Asuka Era) (Tokyo, 1979), he scrupulously examines historical references to images imported to Japan from the Korean peninsula and the impact they had on Japanese sculptural styles in relation to surviving works. Dr. Covell not only neglects such recent Japanese scholarship but displays a gross ignorance of the history of Japanese sculpture in statements such as:

> Monolithic wooden sculpture was largely given up in Japan after the Korean influence waned, as it is a difficult technique indeed. (p. 66)

The statuary of the ninth and tenth centuries, by which time Korean influence was sporadic, is primarily of the single woodblock type.

The topic explored in this book is worthy of investigation. During the 1930's and 40's, Japanese scholars tended to downplay the role of Korea in the development of their own culture, but the past decade has seen a dramatic reversal of this situation. There is a need for a publication aimed at a general audience that explains the close relationship that has traditionally existed between Japan and Korea. This book, however, does not fill that need.

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CHRONICLE AND CALENDAR

The major event in the life of the IAHR during 1985 was the 15th International Congress, held August 18th-23rd at the University of Sydney (Australia). Considering the distance and the travel costs involved for non-Australians, participation was remarkably good. The work of the Congress was divided in 23 sections (of course not all of equal length and equally overloaded), and the thick book of Abstracts, distributed before the opening of the Congress contained abstracts of about 300 papers. In addition to the Plenary Sessions and the social programme, participants could also enjoy a Javanese Shadow Play (Wayang Purva) performance. Thanks to Panut Darmoko who acted as *dalang* (puppeteer) and his assistants for the gamelan music and the invocatory dance, this was more than a performance. It was an authentic Wayang Purva. In addition participants were shown Prof. Staal's film ''Altar of Fire'', a record of what may well turn out to have been the last performance ever of one of the world's most ancient rituals, the Vedic Atiratra-Agnicayana. The Australian member-group has taken upon itself the publication of a selection of the papers presented, which together with the programme and an account of the Congress should also serve as a permanent record of the event.

As is customary IAHR practice, the International Congresses also provide the opportunity for transacting statutory business (Executive Board, International Committee, General Assembly) and holding the elections required by our Statutes. The Secretary-General having finished his term of office, a new Secretary-General was elected:

> Prof. Michael Pye
> University of Marburg
> FG Religionswissenschaft
> Liebigstrasse 37
> 3550 Marburg/L
> WEST GERMANY.

There were some changes in the Executive Board but our President Prof. Annemarie Schimmel, and the Hon. Treasurer continue in

office. The new Secretary-General has conceived the happy idea of starting an informal Newsletter/Bulletin, so that member-groups of the IAHR can be kept informed of news and other matters of interest to them and are no longer dependent exclusively on the brief and irregular reports in the "Chronicle" page of NUMEN.

Talking about Congress Proceedings, mention should also be made of the fact that the Proceedings of 14th International Congress (Winnipeg, Canada) were published by Wilfried Laurier Press in 1983 under the title *Traditions in Contact and Change* (the theme of the Congress). The 755 pp. of the volume, edited by Peter Slater and Donald Wiebe with Maurice Boutin and Harold Coward, contain a selection of the papers read at the Congress. Another volume of Proceedings took a little longer. The second "Methodology Conference" (the first having taken place in Turku, Finland) was held, it will be remembered, in Warsaw, 11-14 September 1979, under the joint auspices of the Polish Society for the Science of Religion and the Polish Academy of Sciences (cf. NUMEN XXVII, 1980, p. 190). Many of the papers read at the conference were published, in Polish translation, in the Polish journal of the History of Religions EUHEMER, but the volume of Proceedings proper appeared in 1984 only. Published by the Polish Society for the History of Religions and edited by Prof. Wytold Tyloch, it bears the title *Current Progress in the Methodology of the Science of Religion*. Its 308 pp. contain all the papers read at the conference in English, French, German and Russian.

As has been observed in earlier "Chronicle" pages, the mushrooming congress industry unavoidably leads to overlapping: conferences of equal interest to the same people are taking place at the same time in different places. Thus whilst the IAHR held its quinquennial Congress in Sydney, a conference on Japanese Buddhism took place in America and the International Society for the Sociology of Religion met in Europe. There seems to be little that can be done about this unfortunate situation. The next major event for historians of religion, considering the traditional overlap between history of religions and orientalist studies (Ancient Near East including Egyptology and Biblical studies, Islamics, Indology, Buddhology, Chinese religions etc.) will be the xxxii. International Congress for Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS) to be

held 25-30 August, 1986, in Hamburg, the IAHR being one of the co-sponsors of the event.

Students of religion who feel that the dialogue between religions which is gaining impetus everywhere is not only a matter of vital concern for the adherents and theologians of the religious concerned, but also a subject of interest to historians of religion, (not least since it indicates shifts, changes and developments within the various religions) will be interested in the intense Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Two major meetings took place in 1980 and 1984. The next conference, under the heading "Buddhism and Christianity—Toward the Human Future" is planned for August 10-15, 1987, at Berkeley, California.

RJZW

THE SOUND OF RELIGION

FRITS STAAL

IV

Semantic approaches

If it is true that semantic plays only a small part in the elucidation of Vedic ritual, the question naturally arises whether the structural complexities of Vedic ritual should perhaps be dismissed for being unique, anomalous and hence of limited use to the general theory of ritual. I briefly addressed this question in the General Introduction to AGNI (I, 16):

> "Perhaps Vedic ritual is too sophisticated, highly developed, and intellectual. This may be so—I could not tell without a major comparative survey of rituals. However, I suspect that such criticism is on a par with saying that it does not matter that a certain theory of language does not apply to Sanskrit or English, because Sanskrit or English are too sophisticated, highly developed, and intellectual. If anyone were to make such a claim, the conclusion would be simple and immediate: his theory of language is itself insufficiently sophisticated, developed, and intellectual. The same verdict must apply to the theories of ritual we have reviewed. If they cannot account for Vedic ritual, they must go."

The theories I had reviewed in the General Introduction to AGNI were rather general; they could probably not account for *any* ritual. Moreover, I had not, at the time of writing, undertaken any comparative study of ritual, although the second volume of AGNI itself contained data that were intriguing in this respect (especially in the articles by Hooykaas, Skorupsi and Strickmann). The question of the uniqueness of Vedic ritual, however, came in for subsequent discussion. In the recently published Dandekar *Festschrift*, for example, Heesterman argued that Vedic ritual is unique, having developed in reaction to particular circumstances of warfare and violence (Heesterman 1984). In the same volume, I expressed disagreement with this point of view by arguing that a similar reaction to similar circumstances exists even in the case of animal ritualization (Staal 1984b).

These questions about uniqueness are empirical and can only be definitively answered when we make detailed comparisons of Vedic ritual with other rituals that appear similarly complex and sophisticated. Students of comparative ritual face certain problems, however, for they cannot do fieldwork all over the world and must accordingly consult the scientific literature, which is almost entirely preoccupied with problems of semantics. The only way to overcome this obstacle is by reading between the lines. This can be done, provided the fieldwork reports of an author are very explicit and rich, and replete with what is nowadays called "thick description." In that case we may try to achieve what Malinowski required that an anthropological book should enable its readers to do: construct a theory that accounts for the author's data but is different from his own theory.

Prior to undertaking any such ventures I made a chance discovery. Fortunate circumstances enabled me to teach a semester in Paris where I became acquainted with the work on Taoist ritual that is being done there by the French Sinologist Kristofer Schipper and his associates. Although the Taoist tradition has not produced a class of works like the *śrauta sūtras*, Taoist ritual consists of networks of relationships that are as rich and varied as those of Vedic ritual. These structural relationships can be fruitfully studied by syntactic methods, in which semantic interpretation plays almost no role. I am cooperating with Schipper on a joint publication in which we will demonstrate that, on account of these reasons as well as others, the similarities between the historically unrelated traditions of Veda and Tao are remarkably close (see Schipper and Staal 1986 and forthcoming).

The similarity between the Vedic and Taoist ritual traditions was entirely unexpected. If such similarities exist, it stands to reason to expect even greater similarities in India itself between Vedic and other Indian ritual traditions. Among the latter, the most important are the Tantric ritual traditions surveyed by Strickmann in the opening pages of his contribution to AGNI II (1983, 418-420). In this area, the most detailed information is available on the South Indian Śaivāgamas (see especially Brunner 1963-1977 for a complete edition and translation of an eleventh century ritual manual). But most of this work is textual and fieldwork on South Indian Tan-

tric ritual (such as Diehl 1956, Chapter 3) stands in need of review.

If some Indian and Chinese rituals are similar, and Indian rituals exhibit the family resemblances one would expect in an area of geographic and historic continuity, it should be rewarding to study the rituals of Southeast Asia. I have accordingly selected for comparative evaluation case studies from three geographical areas: Thailand, Sri Lanka and Bali. In each of these cases there are representative studies by contemporary anthropologists: Stanley Tambiah for Thailand, Gananath Obeyesekere for Sri Lanka, and Clifford Geertz for Bali. These three authors differ in the degree of their semantic involvement: Tambiah possesses the least (which is not surprising in view of his earlier study on pragmatics: Tambiah 1979) and Geertz the most. I was tempted to characterize these three approaches as "Weak Semantics," "Medium Semantics," and "Strong Semantics;" but this could be taken as a criticism, especially of the weak, which is not what I had in mind. I have therefore accepted the lead of these authors themselves and called their approaches, respectively: "Object Semantics," "Psychosemantics," and "Thick Semantics."

In each of these case studies I shall attempt to approximate, at least in principle, that (practically as well as philosophically) impossible ideal demanded by Franz Boas: complete the data before embarking upon theory. Of course, I cannot be exhaustive; I am only interested in illustrations. However, in the case of Tambiah and Obeyesekere, this procedure can to some extent be realized because their data are presented independently of theory, and are moreover similar in kind. I shall therefore start with these. The theories of Tambiah and Obeyesekere, on the other hand, are very different, and so I shall save them for last. In the case of Geertz it is almost impossible to draw the line between facts and interpretations. This will require special attention and since Geertz has also written the most, his section will be the longest.

A. *Object semantics: Stanley Tambiah*

Popular prejudice would expect Tambiah's book *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets* (1984) to contain no mantras and little on ritual. For did the Buddha not condemn both?

Popular prejudice, of course, is not a good guide, even though, by definition, many people follow it. Both Buddhism and Jainism rejected Vedic ritual, but neither rejected ritual (see Heesterman 1964, 29; reprinted 1985, 42). We know, moreover, that Mahāyāna Buddhism, which is not simply "later" Buddhism (as a previous generation, reared on Rhys Davids, imagined) but which is in many respects as close to the lost "original" Buddhism as the Theravāda, is replete with ritual (for references, see Staal 1985b, 27-29). But the same holds for the Theravāda itself, even in its contemporary forms. Spiro (1972; 1980, 191) observes: "Indeed, for those who conceive of the latter form of Buddhism as a precursor of modern humanism (or even of analytical philosophy!), its rich ritual system comes rather as a shock, or is viewed as a late degeneration of ritualless purity."

Spiro's observations derive in part from his fieldwork in Burma. Roughly a fifth of his book is in fact concerned with Burmese Buddhism as a ritual system. Tambiah's book is partly based upon his fieldwork in Thailand, and although his treatment is more specific and sophisticated than Spiro's, it confirms the latter's impressions as formulated in the above quote. Both works are not confined to what is labelled "Buddhist," but include local Burmese and Thai traditions, sometimes referred to as "animist." Spiro has tried to keep these two trends apart, but Tambiah has convincingly shown that this cannot be done. As for the term "saints of the forest," which occurs in Tambiah's title, it is not a product of the author's imagination, nor is it Thai or "animist:" it derives from the Pali *araññavāsī* or *vanavāsī*, "forest dweller," which contrasts with *gāmavāsī*, "village dweller" or *nagaravāsī*, "town dweller" (Tambiah 1984, 53). We recognize here the same distinction encountered in the previous section between *grāmageyagāna*, "songs to be sung in the village," and *araṇyageyagāna*, "songs to be sung in the forest," a distinction that is quite common in Vedic tradition (see, for example, the Āraṇyakas or "forest books," a class of works to which the classical Upaniṣads are generally attached as a kind of appendices; cf. also Malamoud 1967). Buddhist tradition has preserved the terminology, although *nagara*, "town," has been added, reflecting the progress of history and increasing urbanization. The latter development was more important for the growing

Buddhist order than for the successors to the Vedic tradition. Even so, though the label is "Buddhist," we are dealing with an Indian tradition.

The distinction between "forest" and "village" is, of course, related to the distinction introduced by Louis Dumont (1959, 1966) between the renouncer and the man-in-the-world or man-of-caste (cf. also Heesterman 1964, reprinted 1985, 26-44). One might expect that the renouncer of village, family and caste has also renounced ritual; but this is refuted by many facts, including two that we have encountered: the "songs to be sung in the forest" are also ritual songs; and Buddhist monks, who are renouncers, also perform rituals. In Buddhism, the exemplary outcome of a renouncer's experience, we find Dumont's distinction not only obtaining between monks and laymen, but also, within the community of monks themselves, between the "forest" and "village/town" monks. It might be supposed that the former operate on a level that is beyond ritual. But the forest monks are in fact given to "practice" (*patipatti*) which includes ritual as well as meditation, and meditation itself is closely related to both recitation and ritual, as we shall see in a moment. Since the "village/town" monks also perform rituals—albeit different ones—we have come full circle.

Thai Buddhism is replete with mantras, and they have left their traces in Tambiah's book. For example, Achar Man, the saint whose life in the forest is graphically described by Tambiah in a long and fascinating chapter, used a system of mantra meditation that was adopted by Acharn Fun and other leading disciples (Tambiah 1984, 139). The amulets, which play a very important role in Tambiah's book, derive their power from the fact that they have been consecrated, which is also done in the time-honored manner by ritual and mantras. The consecration ceremony, attended by the supreme patriarch of the Buddhist *saṅgha* and by representatives of the government (the deputy prime minister and the minister of defense, no less), begins with offerings made to the shrine deities with the chief court brahmin presiding.[3] "Thereafter, the most important sequence was staged. While 4 monks at the time, sitting on the side, chanted *paritta* chants continuously, 72 senior monks, divided into three batches of 24, sat for four hours at a time

meditating silently and transferring virtue to the pile of amulets by means of a cord that passed through their hands and was attached to the pile ... The monks sit cross-legged, close their eyes, practice concentration, and say words mentally and silently'' (pages 244-245).

Transfer of power by means of a cord predates the invention of electrical wiring. It is a common ritual theme that we find, for example, in the Agnicayana consecration where a string made of hemp links the Yajamāna to the ukhā pot (AGNI I, 323-324; Plate 46). What is of interest in the present context, however, are *paritta* chants and silent meditation. The former term, which means "protection, '' refers to the chanting of Buddhist scriptures as charms and for the sake of exorcism. This was introduced to Sri Lanka in the fourth century A.D. (Lamotte 1976, 1860) and is still extremely popular. As for meditation, it might be supposed that it is something rather different from recitation or chanting—something more "spiritual" than "ritual." The answer is provided by Tambiah in the above passage: meditation is not some sort of idling in emptiness, but "saying words mentally and silently." Read "mantras" for "words," and the situation becomes indistinguishable from that of Vedic ritual where silent recitation plays a very important role (see, e.g., Renou 1949; Renou and Silburn 1954; Staal 1985a).

The details of these meditations are not described by Tambiah, and it is unlikely that considerations of form play as important a part in them as they do in Vedic ritual. Yet they deserve much closer study for they are at the core of the consecration that gives life to the amulets.

The consecration of amulets is a special case of the consecration of a Buddha statue, or *Buddhābhiṣeka*, which Tambiah describes on pages 248-257: "The climactic sequence is the chanting by the four monks of the *gāthā buddhābhiṣeka* (verses of consecration) ... The four monks recite a particular cycle of verses, and each recitation takes about thirty-five minutes..." (Tambiah 1984, 249).

I submit that these "particular" ritual recitations, which constitute the core of the consecration, which itself is the essential step in providing the amulets and Buddha statues with the powers that are the subject of Tambiah's book, have a complex structure that can be exhaustively described in syntactic terms. Moreover, I

would suggest that such recitations are the heart of the matter, not only in the eyes of the participants, but also for any scientific analysis that succeeds in making sense of such cults.

Before we turn to theory *pur sang* I must refer to a controversy that raged in the pages of *The Times Literary Supplement* and to which my attention was drawn by Michel Strickmann. The controversy is not only entertaining, but relevant in the present context because it is concerned with the relationship between philology and anthropology, and the study of ritual requires the assistance of both these disciplines. We often find classical scholars and historians complaining when anthropologists and other social scientists ignore or neglect the historical background of the society in which they are working. Tambiah cannot be faulted for doing this; on the contrary, he has taken pains to inform himself about the historical and doctrinal background of Buddhism, a subject that he rightly regarded as indispensable for the understanding of his Buddhist monks, but with which he was not professionally familiar. Now, Buddhism is an enormously complex subject; even if one confines oneself to the Theravāda (a confinement that is definitely unnatural), it requires sustained and concentrated study for a goodly number of years. We should respect Tambiah for his efforts to go beyond his professional field of expertise, where his fieldwork appeared to demand it; and one should not be surprised or upset when, occasionally, he errs.

Not so Richard Gombrich, an Oxford Sanskritist who has himself done fieldwork in Sri Lanka and written a book about Sinhalese Buddhism (Gombrich 1971). In a savage review (Gombrich 1985) he pins on Tambiah a long list of errors, mostly pertaining to spelling, languages and history. Tambiah has replied to this charge, and turns out to be right in many cases (though least often in matters of history where he or his proofreader has incurred Gombrich's wrath by twice replacing "A.D." by "B.C."). Most of the items on this laundry list of errors and alleged errors are marginal to the chief concerns of Tambiah's book. Some are of general interest, however, and are also related to our present context. Among these is a discussion on the traditional class of extraordinary powers (*siddhi, iddhi, abhijñā*) found in the Yoga, Hindu as well as Buddhist. One of the most colorful of these is levitation, and

Tambiah has a story to tell about a pilot of the Royal Thai Air Force, who, on a practice flight over the Mae Pang mountain:

> "saw a monk sitting in meditation upon a cloud, and (he) had to practice much skill in swerving away to avoid hitting the apparition. Having grounded the plane, the pilot with his flight map in hand went scouting on the mountain, and there he recognized Luang Pu Waen as the monk he had seen in the clouds. The news of Luang Pu Waen's power of levitation and flying spread quickly—it was broadcast on the radio and splashed in the newspapers. And the public's demand for his medallions soared" (Tambiah 1984, 272).

Gombrich accused Tambiah of attributing to the Buddha the view that such powers are commendable, to which Tambiah replied that he had only followed the descriptions of Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* which Gombrich himself had acclaimed in his book as "the unitary standard of doctrinal orthodoxy for all Theravāda Buddhists." The *Visuddhimagga* belongs, as a matter of fact, to the fifth century A.D., and since the earliest accounts of the Buddha describe him "only as a man, not as a super-human being" (Nakamura 1980, 83), we don't know anything about what his opinion might have been with regard to such special powers. What we do know is that in the Yoga system these powers were not frowned upon. Gombrich's opinion is therefore based upon Western prejudice—the same prejudice we find in Mircea Eliade (1964, 223, 401 and 1969, 338) whose pertinent statements were refuted by Wasson (1968, 331) followed by myself (1975, 97). This is ironic, for Gombrich himself has demonstrated that Eliade's statements on Buddhism are riddled with errors of fact and interpretation (Gombrich 1974). What is instructive in the present context is that prejudice is more pernicious than ignorance—a circumstance which is strikingly relevant to the understanding of ritual and to which we shall return.

The last part of Tambiah's book deals with "Conceptual and Theoretical Clarifications" (pages 291-347). Rather surprisingly, Tambiah does not make much use of the ideas on performative analysis developed in his 1979 lecture. True, he uses the term "indexical," but it does not make much of a theoretical contribution. In strict terms it is not even applicable, because it does not vary with its users, thus leading to different truth values in statements referring to them. The idea that is most interesting in the present

context is the "objectification of *charisma* in objects and fetishes" which the cult of amulets illustrates. Though Weber's theory allowed for the "routinization of charisma" in social institutions and social positions, Tambiah notes that "he was blind to the symbolism of objectification of charisma in objects and fetishes" (page 339).

Given such a process, semantic analysis is clearly applicable and appropriate. It is these features that suggested my caption "object semantics." For if the introduction of semantics is justified by anything, it is the use of objects that refer to something else; and if amulets are not that, nothing is. Thus we have ample justification for semantics, albeit outside the domain of ritual.

Tambiah also uses the expression "semiotic code," but it is not clear what it can do that plain English cannot. More striking is the description in his last chapter (entitled: "The objectification of charisma and the fetishism of objects") of the relative scarcity and ensuing commercial value of the Thai amulets. They become "private possessions of laymen who expect to use the amulet's potency to manipulate, overpower, seduce, and control their fellow men and women in an ongoing drama of social transactions." Tambiah applies to his amulets Mauss' expression of a "magico-religious guarantee of rank and prosperity" (page 342). Actually, if one replaces in many of these passages "amulets" by "dollars" one obtains an interesting theory of the origination of capitalism. In this respect, Tambiah's work supplements what we now know of the development of Buddhist monasteries on the trade routes between India, Central Asia and China into fortified constructions that served not only as motels but also as banks.

Tambiah's conclusions suggest a clarification of my own position on questions of semantics. I do not reject semantics or the use of symbols in anthropology or the study of culture. I only reject the idea that these notions are helpful tools in the analysis of ritual. The home of semantics is language, and semantic analysis applies in the first place in contexts of language; then, via language, it may also apply to mathematics, philosophy, art, mythology and many other domains of experience. To say that semantics does not apply to ritual is tantamount to saying that ritual is not a language. To claim that *all* of culture consists of symbols and meanings, and is in that

respect language-like, would simply entail that ritual cannot be part of culture. This is a possibility to which we shall return, but not until we have paid attention to other case studies in Sri Lanka and Bali.

B. *Psycho-Semantics: Gananath Obeyesekere*

Gananath Obeyesekere's *Cult of the Goddess Pattini* (1984) provides a detailed description of a cult that still thrives in Sri Lanka and South India and that has close connexions with Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism and Sinhala tradition. The textual traditions of this cult are embodied in a compendium of thirty-five ritual texts or songbooks. Obeyesekere has translated most of these texts, although the number 35 is an idealization that is artificially maintained by emendations, splitting, addition and elimination (page 32). He has in fact provided translations of 58 different ritual texts that together occupy more than 150 pages of his book. Many of these texts are sung and enacted in the course of rituals. It is obvious that we are dealing with a very rich tradition of rituals and songs, and that Obeyesekere has done pioneering work in making it accessible. His interest in this tradition is clearly semantic, and this is not surprising when one places it in the various contexts in which he himself has placed it with consummate skill.

Obeyesekere's book consists of 629 pages packed with information and it would be impossible to do it any justice within a short compass. In fact, the author says in his Preface (page xvii): "My Pattini research spans the whole of my anthropological career." I recall how I accompanied Obeyesekere once to one of those beautiful isolated villages where he had already done a great deal of fieldwork. That was in 1965, when I was recording mantras, ranging from Buddhist *upasampadā* ordinations to Sinhalese charms against snakes and cattle's foot disease. A half day walk across a hill and through scattered jungle patches led to a lush green valley of rice-fields, cocoa-nut palms and rubber trees, with a river flowing at the bottom—a paradise not for the people who live there, unfortunately, and not for the inquiring mind, but certainly for the senses of any intrepid visitor who has not yet lost them. And yet, despite abundant meaning and social context, the semantic analysis

of the Pattini cult may not be all there is to it. There are definite indications that another approach could contribute something that is still missing.

Some of the texts are never sung or enacted, and Obeyesekere has omitted most of these. But there are also cases where a text is omitted because it does not seem to fit semantically. For example, when the *kapurāla*'s white robe is consecrated, Obeyesekere says about the accompanying song (text 11): "it is not an important one in content, and I shall only quote excerpts from it" (page 111). Instead, he concentrates on the semantically relevant contrast between the whiteness of the *kapurāla*'s robe, which has to be pure because he interacts with gods who are pure, and the patched yellow robe of the Buddhist monk, which in theory should be made of rags and which relates to "his involvement in processes of death and decay (polluting activities)."

There are other similar cases where a song is omitted because its content does not fit its ritual context, and where Obeyesekere makes comments such as "this text is of little significance" (page 240). The reader wonders why, in many such cases, the songs are nevertheless sung. There are also examples that display some degree of formal complexity. A text that was first recited by the chief *kapurāla* continues to be recited by him and another senior priest, while an assistant dances to the beat of drums (page 189). The rhyme structure can be quite complex, so that Obeyesekere comments: "This kind of complexity is a function of greater specialization, literacy and book learning and closeness to Buddhist civilizing influences" (page 190). Elsewhere the audience intersperses the song with shouts (page 191; cf. AGNI I, 642, and the *pratigara* interjections of the Adhvaryu: AGNI I, 623, 640, 650, etc.). We also come across "high-sounding combinations of Pali or Sanskrit, or both, and Sinhala" (page 202). In all these cases, formal considerations play a role, and a syntactic analysis might be able to account for structures that the semantic approach fails to explain.

There are numerous instances where the content of a song is not clear or intelligible to the participants (e.g., page 239). The identity of particular gods is often unclear or controversial (e.g., page 87). There is a mystery of twelve "missing deities," which the author

interprets as a survival of a gradually disappearing cult (pages 285-293). Elsewhere, songs that are meant for a particular occasion are sung on other occasions as well (e.g., page 221). Some songs are "not intrinsic to the ritual" (page 231); others (e.g., the "head-to-foot verse") are "standard" and appear in various sections of the ceremony (page 96). Many chants incorporate intricate numerical and metrical structures (e.g., "twenty-one short stanzas and sixteen long stanzas:" page 101). All these are cases of ritualization which can probably be explained along syntactic lines. Phonological analysis would be in order when studying the various modes of chanting, about which Obeyesekere does not provide much detail although he sometimes refers to style or mentions particular songs that are sung at a faster or slower pace. In one context, an *a* is deleted, because "it would introduce an extra syllable and upset the rhyme scheme and rhythm" (page 89: "hence *sura* is used instead of *asura*"—a fact that should delight Sanskritists, as the author hints).

It is likely that the songs of the Pattini cult are often more closely related to the acts they accompany than is the case in Vedic ritual. Some acts are very similar to Vedic rites. The cutting of the *milla* tree, for example (pages 141-143), which provides firewood for the fire-trampling rituals, is very similar to such Agnicayana rites as the fetching of mud for the ukhā pots (AGNI I, 288-296) or the cutting of the *bilba* tree from which the sacrificial pole will be made (AGNI I, 590-591 and Plate 96). The extent of such similarities would further depend on the structural relationships that obtain in the Pattini cult between the songs and the acts, a topic that Obeyesekere has not enlarged upon. It is clear that there are, in this instance , semantic similarities, and likely that there are syntactic similarities as well.

The importance of form and of formal structures is obvious to anyone who reads between the lines, and it sometimes comes to the surface. The most telling example is a rite that asks permission from the gods and forgiveness for accidental faults, which is necessary because, as the *kapurāla* says, "the hand may go wrong and the mouth may go wrong" (page 112). Rarely do we find a more straightforward indication of the continuing emphasis not on meaning, but on act and recitation as the two main vehicles of ritual activity.

What, then, has Obeyesekere to say on meaning, and what are the theoretical observations he makes? It would be foolhardy to deal with a topic so large in the context of a book so rich in information that is entirely new. However, I shall try to give at least an idea of the author's two chief contributions in this area. We should first of all note that Obeyesekere includes much information and speculation on the historical background of rites, and in so doing goes beyond the synchronic analysis of the ritual system. About this he has some remarkable things to say—remarkable not least because they apply to ritual as well as to myth:

> "Any mythological tradition comes from historically diverse sources. A tradition of myth is a composite of preexisting beliefs, beliefs that are newly invented, and those incorporated from other belief systems. An analysis of the sources of a given mythic tradition may help us unravel the processes by which a religious tradition came to be constituted. Anthropologists have been averse to a historical study of myth ever since Radcliff-Brown castigated the diachronic study of oral tradition as 'pseudohistory.' However, in a literate culture like Sri Lanka, with historical records going back about two thousand years, it may be possible to relate the tradition of myth and ritual to historical periods or events and thereby to 'verify' hypotheses or propositions regarding the former. It may therefore be possible to construct a "speculative history" of a mythic tradition, grounded on historical data" (page 283).

As a matter of fact, these historical reconstructions are not so different from what professional historians are often engaged in doing. What is interesting is what Radcliff-Brown did not say: namely, that insofar as anthropology deals with the study of ritual, such historical reconstructions are "pseudo-anthropology." For although these reconstructions may be of interest by themselves, they may not be relevant to an understanding of the ritual per se— just as the etymology of a word may not be relevant to its meaning or use. Obeyesekere is, of course, conscious of this. His readers should be similarly aware that these explanations do not explain the ritual system. They only add to the impression that, in historical terms, it is a hodgepodge—just like the systems Tambiah studied and like the Vedic "Great Tradition" itself—a topic to which we shall return. In the meantime—and before another Gombrich comes along—one should be grateful to the author for his historical reconstructions which do not merely connect Sri Lanka with South India, but point at more distant origins for certain features (in particular, the ritual drama of the resurrection of Pattini's consort) in

Western Asia and in the Mediterranean. Although such connexions remain unproven they do not conflict with what is presently known about early Indian history. Moreover, although Obeyesekere is not frightened of speculation, he knows when to stop—unlike S. B. Steever, the author of a perfunctory review in the *Journal of American Oriental Studies* who wishes that Obeyesekere had gone further and included theology and existentialist metaphysics (Steever 1985, 187).

There is perhaps a reason for Steever's unreasonable expectations: for Obeyesekere uses similarly alien kinds of semantic interpretation by adopting the Freudian psycho-analytical reductions that he had earlier used, for example, in *Medusa's Hair* (1981). This is the second area of "semantic interpretation" offered to elucidate the cult. I am not competent to judge these psycho-analytical attempts at explanation, but it strikes me that they may only be helpful when we are dealing with neurotic individuals about whose personal life and childhood a great deal is known. In *Medusa's Hair* we were provided with seven case studies of people who Obeyesekere had not actually put on the couch, but with whom he had lengthy personal conversations. In the Pattini book, however, we are dealing with cults that are much less personal. Even though the author asserts in his Preface that he "got to know intimately" the *kapurālas* from a number of villages and towns, a psycho-analytical treatment is accordingly less convincing. I shall not belabor this point but give one illustration of a psycho-analytical interpretation that is simply out-of-date.

Although Obeyesekere's book is primarily devoted to the Pattini cult, many other closely or less closely related ritual developments are also provided with a detailed description and analysis. More than a hundred pages are devoted to the *Aṅkeliya* rituals that have nothing to do with ankles but a great deal with anal intercourse. This is regarded by the participants with both fascination and abhorrence. According to Obeyesekere, however, the homosexual theme is not as important as the "key emotions" of "castration and impotence anxieties" (page 487).[4] But when he tells us that an important part of the ceremonies, in which only adult males participate, consists in two teams pulling ropes that are attached to two interlocked horns (either horns of the sambar deer, or wooden

hooks or tree roots representing such horns) until one of them snaps, and that these horns stand for penises, while in a closely related rite a male demon shaves the body hair of another man, one wonders. One also wonders whether these reductions of homosexual activities to castration fears, so outmoded and yet so tediously familiar, could not be straightened out by some measure of Gay Liberation. As it is, they are no more than stains on a book that in every other respect is vibrant with new facts, new ideas, and new insights.

The historical reconstructions add much to the value of this book and the psycho-analytical suggestions, although of limited relevance, do not interfere with the presentation of the materials and hence do not detract from its value. However, neither type of analysis throws light on the ritual systems as such. Given the nature and abundance of the data, a syntactic analysis should therefore be rewarding.

C. *Thick Semantics: Clifford Geertz*

Clifford Geertz' monograph *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (1980) takes us further away from India but not from Hinduism and Buddhism. Geertz doesn't only write about cults; he has become a cult figure himself. One thinks of expressions such as "deep play" (Geertz 1972) or "thick description" (Geertz 1973), that have not only become slogans (from Sanskrit *śloka*, a verse in a popular meter) but that can hold their own even with mantras such as *om* in suggesting profound and hidden significance. A few words about Geertz' background may therefore not be out of order, especially since the theatre of his research, at least in the book under discussion, is closer to the scene of the XVth International Congress than any of the other areas of research discussed so far.

Early in his career, Geertz put Dutch scholars of Indonesia to shame by writing a brilliant book entitled *The Religion of Java* (1960). Using purely anthropological and synchronic methods of fieldwork, he showed that Javanese religion on the village or "small town" level consists of three strata, corresponding to the three levels that historians had distinguished as having originated in Islam, (Buddhism-)Hinduism and what had been vaguely referred

to as "animistic beliefs." One of the results of this work was that
it became clear that traditional characterizations of Hinduism and
Islam along the lines of the Christian concept of religion, implying
exclusiveness and incompatibility with other religions, are inap-
propriate, at least in Java. Geertz is aware of some of the concep-
tual problems inherent in the Western concept of religion, but
being interested less in what "the religion of Java" is *not* than in
what it *is*, he concentrates on features of a different sort, for exam-
ple (Geertz 1960, 238):

> "The three major foci of *prijaji* "religious" life are etiquette, art, and
> mystical practice. I admit to using "religion" in a somewhat broader sense
> than may be typical, but there is nothing else to do when these factors are
> so fused as to make their separate consideration nearly meaningless."

This usage of the concept of religion is not only *broader*, but also *nar-
rower* than the typical sense; it excludes, for example, considerations
of doctrine or belief—a significant fact to which we shall return.
If we compare Geertz' work with the monographs on Indonesian
Islam by earlier Dutch authors (e.g., Drewes 1925, Kraemer 1921,
van Nieuwenhuijze 1945, Rinkes 1909, Schrieke 1916—none of
them referred to by Geertz) we find, not surprisingly, that the pic-
ture based upon contemporary anthropological observation shows
a much greater degree of integration of historically distinct features
than the picture based upon the philological study of texts. Most of
the books mentioned deal with Sufi texts from Java and Sumatra
that closely resemble the Islamic mysticism of Gujarat on the west
coast of India from which they derive. Islam took root in Gujarat
soon after the Muslim conquest of Sind, viz., within a century after
Muhammad's death (the campaign started in year 92 of the Hijra,
i.e., 711 A.D.); and it began also, almost immediately, to undergo
Indianization. Thus we find, for example, the followers of Shah
Madar, a Sufi born in Aleppo in 1051 A.D. who spent much of his
life in India, smoke *bhang* with Indian ascetics (there are stories in
their writings about Muhammad using it in paradise: Husain 1929,
29). Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that Hindu and
Muslim currents merged; according to Husain, the Madāri cult
was "très répandu parmi les paysans sans distinction de religion."
Combining philology, history, and anthropology we thus find that
the situation in Java as observed by Geertz, in respect of emerging

syncretism, may not have been so very different from what it had been in India several centuries earlier. After settling in Java, Indian Sufism, already a mixture, was further enriched and modified by local elements, some of them also of Indian provenance, others purely Indonesian.

Another of Geertz' books, *Islam Observed* (1968), provided an account which implied that the types of Islam met with in Indonesia and in Morocco, i.e., at the geographical extremities of the Muslim world, have been so thoroughly moulded by local culture and history, and have accordingly so little in common, that the appropriateness of applying a single religious label such as "Islam" again becomes questionable. This book also illustrates that certain features of civilization are stronger and more permanent than religion. This was already evident from India, as we have just seen; applies especially to caste (a feature that is often preserved, for example, when an Indian converts to Islam or Christianity); and was later confirmed with specific reference to ritual ("the invariance of ritual under religious transformation," or "the invariance of ritual across religious boundaries:" see Staal 1985, 1986; Schipper and Staal 1986).

The Bali book dates from 1980, and followed a series of more specialised studies on Bali (1964, 1972, 1973, etc.). The term *negara*, which in Bali and Indonesia generally means "state," is none other than the Sanskrit *nagara*, or "town," which Buddhist monks added to "village" so as to form a pair in opposition to the tradition of "forest." In Bali (as in India), *negara* contrasts with *desa* as "state" or "town" does with "countryside."

Geertz' book deals primarily with politics, but since in Bali political theory is hard to come by, he has sought it in the ritual performances that are the subject of his final chapter, entitled: "Political Statement: Spectacle and Ceremony." In this chapter, ritual ceremonies are interpreted as symbolic expressions of power. Geertz concentrates on the more spectacular and popular "outstanding features" of these ceremonies—e.g., in the case of cremation, "a social one, the procession; an aesthetic one, the tower; and a natural one, the fire" (page 118). A categorization in terms of "social," "aesthetic," and "natural" is Western, which does not mean that it must be inapplicable—unless, of course, it *is*. The

available evidence suggests precisely that. For much is indeed
known about the ritual structure of these ceremonies from other
sources, some of which are quoted by Geertz himself, especially a
series of monographs by C. Hooykaas on Balinese Hindu and Bud-
dhist rituals which are almost as detailed and precise as our
monographs on Vedic ritual because they are based not merely
upon Hooykaas' observation but also upon the knowledge and
traditions of the officiating priests. (Hooykaas was not familiar with
Vedic ritual until a few years before his death in 1979; he was much
impressed by Diehl's 1956 book on South Indian agamic rituals:
see Hooykaas 1964, 17).

Hooykaas' oeuvre (which is a culmination of earlier investiga-
tions by Dutch scholars such as Goris, Grader, Swellengrebel and
others) has established that Balinese culture is in one respect very
similar to Indian, and especially Vedic, culture: what we tend to
label as ''religion'' consists there almost entirely of complexes of
mantras and rites. While processions, towers or fires are among
their more spectacular manifestations, these complexes themselves
are elaborate constructions that are in many specific respects
similar to the Vedic ceremonies. They may also be of equally ample
proportions. For example, an extended ceremony called
Ekādaśarudra (''The Eleven Rudras''), reputedly celebrated only
once in a century, was performed in April 1963 in Besakih on the
slope of Gunung Agung (cf. Hooykaas 1973, 167-249). Allegedly
Buddhist, it refers to the same Rudra who is addressed on the
eighth day of the Agnicayana by the Adhvaryu when the Udgātā
sings his Flow of Milk (above, page 52).[5] These ritual complexes
are celebrated on all kinds of occasions and may be used to express
all kinds of things: myths, history, ideologies, power relationships,
status, political and personal ambitions, etc.; but in no case is there
an intrinsic and necessary relation between the rites or mantras and
what they are called upon to express. That Geertz had an inkling
of this may be inferred from two paragraphs of the Bali monograph
that are of particular methodological interest and deserve to be
quoted in full (Geertz 1980, 103):

> ''The Balinese, not only in court rituals but generally, cast their most com-
> prehensive ideas of the way things ultimately are, and the way that men
> therefore should act, into immediately apprehended sensuous symbols—into

a lexicon of carvings, flowers, dances, melodies, gestures, chants, ornaments, temples, postures, and masks—rather than into a discursively apprehended, ordered set of explicit 'beliefs.' This means of expression makes any attempt to summarize those ideas a dubious business. As with poetry, which in the broad, *poiesis* ('making') sense is what is involved, the message here is so deeply sunk in the medium that to transform it into a network of propositions is to risk at once both of the characteristic crimes of exegesis: seeing more in things than is really there, and reducing a richness of particular meaning to a drab parade of generalities.

   But whatever the difficulties and dangers, the exegetical task must be undertaken if one wants to be left with more than the mere fascinated wonderment—like a cow looking at a gamelan orchestra, as the Balinese put it—that Helms, for all his responsiveness and powers of description, displays. Balinese ritual, and most especially Balinese state ritual, does embody doctrine in the literal sense of "teachings," however concretely they are symbolized, however unreflectively they are apprehended. Digging them out for presentation in explicit form is not a task for which the Balinese, aside from a few modernists nowadays, have ever had any interest. Nor would they feel, any more than a translated poet ever feels, that any such presentation really gets to the heart of the matter, gets it really right. Glosses on experience, and most especially on other people's experience, are not replacements for it. At the very best they are paths, twisted enough, toward understanding it."

But has Geertz proved his point? Are there teachings, is there a metaphysics ("most comprehensive ideas of the way things ultimately are") or a system of ethics ("the way that men should therefore act") underlying this "lexicon" of carvings, flowers, dances, and so on? Do the ritual ceremonies to which Geertz refers (and rather synoptically characterizes) express teachings about power? And is to deny this facile assumption equivalent to being a cow, or being like that nineteenth century British globe-trotter and sightseer L. V. Helms who authored a travelogue entitled *Pioneering in the Far East and Journeys to California in 1849 and to the White Sea in 1848*? One rather doubts it.

Let us take a closer look at that proverbial cow. What do the Balinese mean when they refer to a cow looking at a gamelan orchestra? That she misses its metaphysics, ethics, teachings or meaning? Well, so do most people, because a gamelan orchestra possesses none of these. What the cow misses and what the connoisseurs appreciate is the structure of the music (its "syntax") and the tonal qualities of its melodies (its "phonetics"). That music expresses meaning like language is a nineteenth century Western belief, inspired by program music, that certainly does not apply to gamelan—a belief about which the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*

(1970, 696a) states: ''About 1900, many persons, particularly writers on music, believed that in order to be understandable music must 'express something' or 'tell a story' ... Today such views are things of the past ...''. Why, then, should we return to such superstitions when interpreting gamelan, or ritual, for that matter?

I do not deny that what Geertz says about power and politics may be relevant to Balinese culture; but that it constitutes *the* implicit teaching or *the* implicit meaning of the ceremonies he refers to is at least far-fetched. In any case, it would need to be demonstrated. The Balinese are intelligent enough to express their political notions explicitly and in direct terms. They are not cows; they have language and can express their ideas without having to sing or dance them. True, there are all kinds of connexions and relationships, but these hold between all the phenomena that Geertz has enumerated—the rites, the flowers, the chants, the ornaments, the temples, and the political ideas as well. The relationships between all these entities constitute a rich and intricate structure that will undoubtedly be difficult to unravel. That would be a task worthy of an anthropologist, and Geertz himself hinted at the desirability of such an investigative analysis when he claimed that the Balinese cockfight is a ''cultural document,'' ''at least as important a revelation of what being a Balinese 'is really like''' as Balinese art and social organization (I quote after Jonathan Lieberson's 1985 review of Geertz' *Local Knowledge* to which I shall return). However, Geertz has performed no such task. In the *Negara* book he does the opposite: he isolates and concentrates upon one term as the key that must unlock all the others. Such a move can serve no purpose other than to reveal one's own particular interests and prejudices. Any author is free, of course, to write about whatever he likes. Geertz' book is about politics; but that does not imply that Balinese ritual is about politics. Moreover, to collect ideas and meaning on one side and relegate all concrete entities to the other, and then to postulate one-to-one-correspondences between these two collections, smacks of the kind of naive dualism that Western philosophers are trying so hard to overcome.[6]

After having first (in *Cockfights*) claimed that everything hangs together, without demonstrating it, Geertz now (in *Negara*) claims the opposite, viz., that one thing holds the key to everything, or at

least much else, again without demonstrating it. The question is not only whether this theory is true; the question is, does it even make sense? How could people be so obsessed by politics and yet so collectively inarticulate as to express it entirely through ceremonies without being able to refer to it in words? Where is the "hermeneutic circle" (referred to on the same page 103)? Why can we not simply recognize that these ceremonies are rule-governed activities, which we may begin to understand only when we know the rules? Geertz himself suggests this implicitly (on the next page) when he compares them, rather more aptly, to a baseball game. Must a baseball game necessarily also teach a lesson, have a meaning, a metaphysics, and an ethic? We all know better: if we wish to know and understand baseball, we must know what the rules are. Subsequently we can discuss its relationships to art, literature, religion and politics. And of course, we may learn about its psychology or anthropology by including spectators' responses and much else. Alan Dundes has done it brilliantly for American football (Dundes 1978).

Long before *Negara*, Geertz had a much better idea about "the religion of Bali." In a 1964 article, reprinted in 1973, he wrote:

> "In Java, where the pressure of external influences has been relentless, and where traditional social structure has lost much of it resilience, not just one but several relatively well-rationalized systems of belief and worship have developed, giving a conscious sense of religious diversity, conflict, and perplexity still quite foreign to Bali. Thus, if one comes, as I did, to Bali after having worked in Java, it is the near total absence of either doubt or dogmatism, the metaphysical nonchalance, that almost immediately strikes one. That, and the astounding proliferation of ceremonial activity. The Balinese, perpetually weaving intricate palm-offerings, preparing elaborate ritual meals, decorating all sorts of temples, marching in massive processions, and falling into sudden trances, seem much too busy practising their religion to think (or worry) very much about it" (Geertz 1973, 175-176).

Geertz then remarks that "to say that Balinese religion is not methodically ordered is not to say that it is not ordered at all," and goes on to briefly describe three "relatively well-defined *ritual* complexes which exhibit, in turn, a definite approach to properly religious issues no less respectable for being implicit" (my italics). It is a pity that Geertz has not pursued the study of these ritual complexes on their own terms, and instead has constructed from his own imagination (that is, religious background) the allegedly im-

plicit but "properly religious" issues. But now we see something surprising happen. In the *Negara* book, these issues are no longer religious but turn out to be political. It is difficult to reconstruct the meanderings of an undisciplined mind, but can it be that we witness the result of a merger between two erroneous assumptions, viz., (1) ritual must express something and (2) ritual must express religion, in the manner, say, of a "hermeneutic circle?" That would explain the "hopping back and forth between the whole conceived through the parts that actualize it and the parts conceived through the whole that motivates them" (Lieberson 1984, 40, apparently after Geertz). It might also explain the contradiction between ritual expressing political teachings—the main thesis of the book—and such expressions as "a royal cremation was not an echo of a politics" (page 120) or "to construe the expressions of the theatre state, to apprehend them as theory" is "prejudice" (page 136). I leave it to others to disentangle this; hopefully Geertz himself will come forward to do it.

So let us return to things "properly religious." Any reader would expect such things to possess at least a proper religious affiliation. But in Bali, as in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, the other countries of Southeast Asia, and indeed in Nepal and on the Indian subcontinent itself, it is often impossible to make a sharp distinction between Hindu, Buddhist, and "animist." Geertz had noted this with respect to Javanese Islam, which is permeated by Hindu and animist notions, and even though he sometimes refers to "Hindu Bali," he is careful when mentioning Hinduism ("is that what the Balinese great tradition should be called?" page 46). What we actually find in Bali is a kind of totality in which features that can be differently labelled whe one looks at their historical origins have merged—just as in Sri Lanka (see Obeyesekere, *passim*), and just as in Thailand where we meet with an amalgam of Buddhism and "animism" as Tambiah pointed out in his refutation of Spiro's attempt to keep the two distinct.

One reason that labels such as Hinduism and Buddhism are not to be taken too seriously is that doctrines and beliefs are not as important as in Western religion; what counts instead is ritual affiliation, lineages, initiation, cults and practice (see AGNI II, xiv-xv). This explains why things that appear incompatible from a doctrinal

point of view are easily combined: they are not doctrinal, but ritual. If Geertz had pursued his study of Balinese ritual complexes and not persisted in his search for religious meaning, he would not have missed a discovery that would have been a fitting climax to his two earlier findings, viz., that the "religion" of Java is not like a religion in the Western monotheistic sense, and that the "religions" of Indonesia and Morocco, though both labelled "Islam," are not a single religion in that sense either. For in Bali, Geertz was on the verge of making an even more momentous discovery, viz., that there, as in many of the traditional societies of South, Southeast and East Asia, rituals are not necessarily associated with doctrinal superstructures or belief systems; that is, they are *rituals without religion*.

The use of such words as "proper" and "properly" is very revealing about the prejudices of an author. Part of what Geertz apparently had in mind before he ever set foot on Balinese soil, although he need at no time to have been fully aware of it, is that the Balinese *must* have a *proper religion*. It is ironic that Hooykaas made a similarly revealing slip in his own domain; and Geertz did not fail to notice it. Amin Sweeney drew my attention to the memorable exchange (memorable, that is, if one tends to remember abusive oratory) that took place between Geertz and Hooykaas in the French journal *Archipel* (1976) on the occasion of Hooykaas' review of the Geertzes' book Kinship in Bali (1975). Hooykaas demonstrated in subtle, not so subtle, and downright awkward ways that the Geertzes had many facts wrong and were not very familiar with the scientific literature on Bali. Anyone who checks the list of alleged mistakes will concede that Hooykaas was right in almost every case; but Geertz, declaiming eloquently on anthropology and philology in his felicitous style, got the better of his adversary and the uncritical reader's sympathy will rest with him. In two cases (pages 25 and 134), Hooykaas' criticism is simply lost on Geertz because when the latter wrote his rebuttal he still did not know that he did not know the sources that Hooykaas criticized him for not knowing.

In the course of his review, Hooykaas quoted the third sentence of the Geertzes' book in the following context:

"Several years ago a team of TV reporters interviewed the Paris public, try-
ing to find out what it still knew about Stalingrad after a quarter of a century.
The results were devastating. I have only to remind the author of the third
clause of his own book: 'Two fully cooperative and intelligent Balinese from
the same village may give completely variant accounts on matters that the
ethnologist believes to be crucial for his formulations.' Quite so, but then
why not consult proper books?'' (page 241).

Geertz replied that his sentence "states the conditions of an
ethnographer's work, the very shape of the 'fact' he is in-
vestigating, and the challenge and possibility his subject offers him,
not something to be got round by consulting 'proper books''' (page
225).

That Hooykaas' bias is "books" is not surprising; but that
Geertz' bias is "religion" is. For, as an anthropologist, Geertz
should be especially cautious when it comes to projecting concepts
from his own culture. We have seen that Geertz was cautious in his
Java book, despite its easily misleading title; in the Bali book he is
less prudent although the Western concept of religion is even less
applicable there.

At a closer look, the exchange between Geertz and Hooykaas
demonstrates that the two fighting cocks agree at least to some ex-
tent on the importance of written sources; and this agreement
reveals a shared bias which might not mar our understanding of,
say, Islam or China, but which is another obstacle to the under-
standing of Balinese—and indeed, most South and Southeast
Asian—culture. The issue is an interesting one. Hooykaas quotes
Geertz at some length, and I shall do the same especially because
the quote comes from an earlier (1964) paper that in the meantime
has become well-known and has been reprinted in Geertz 1973
(where the quote now occurs on page 185). Hooykaas writes (page
237) with reference to this 1964 paper:

"Here Geertz tells us about post-war Bali, to be exact the year 1957, that new
era (after centuries of manuscript copying) of mimeographed and sometimes
even printed pamphlets. Some of them are done in Balinese and others in
Roman script, some of them in Balinese language and others in Indonesian.
Nearly weekly they were produced by publishers, in the island-capital Den-
pasar mainly, but also in the provincial capitals Gianyar, Klungkung and
Tabanan (names not to be forgotten). 'When I bought some books of this
sort,' Geertz writes on p. 297, 'and left them around our house in the village,
our front porch became a literary center where groups of villagers would
come and sit for hours on end and read them to one another, commenting

now and then on their meaning, and almost invariably remarking that it was only since the Revolution that they had been permitted to see such writings, that in the colonial period the upper castes prevented their dissemination altogether. This whole process represents, thus, a spreading of religious literacy beyond the traditional priestly castes—for whom the writings were in any case more magical esoterica than canonical scriptures—to the masses, a vulgarization, in the root sense, of religious knowledge and theory. For the first time, at least a few ordinary Balinese are coming to feel that they can get some understanding of what their religion is all about; and more important, that they have a need for and a right to such understanding.'''

If I had to review this passage I would probably comment on those righteous, anti-colonial and democratic Americans with their open houses and canonical scriptures. Perhaps I would add that it is at least conceivable that the visiting anthropologist's house was more comfortable and spacious than many others in the village; or remark on the at least apparent inconsistency inherent in the notion of a priestly class that does not understand the meaning of these very writings they must themselves have composed. But Hooykaas, who was more knowledgeable about Bali than I shall ever be, and also more kindly disposed even under duress, reacted as follows:

"The painful reality is that the author here straight-away believed a few young village lads, probably not yet born when in 1928 the Kirtya Foundation for palmleaf manuscripts was created in the then capital Singaraja. Soon it had its own modest building: a spacious room for clerks and European books of reference on Bali and Lombok, a very sufficient store for the well-preserved manuscripts, a well-visited room for anybody interested, opened by the then acting Governor-General."

Hooykaas continues in this vein, informing us how that Kirtya library, which now lodges some 3700 manuscripts and which during the colonial period wrote and financed a dozen publications, was a standard reference library on Bali and Lombok. About the frequent visits he made there in the late thirties and early forties, Hooykaas says, "I cannot remember that the readers' room was ever unoccupied."

Geertz replied that the "young village lads" who spent time on his porch were in fact "men of all ages, including ones born not only before 1928 but even before Hooykaas"... and so on it goes. One hopes that, should his essay be reprinted again, Geertz will not withhold from his readers this information on the Kirtya library (about which he wrote in his reply that it "has done invaluable work"). It is tempting to say more about this exchange, especially

about colonialism—for example, that the Dutch, British and French, whatever their atrocities, left a splendid scholarly record of the cultures, languages, and histories of the countries where they committed them, whereas the Americans, who were almost successful in destroying the country, never even left room in their system of higher education for studying Vietnam (see Staal 1970b).

In the present context, the important issue is the following. Geertz' assumption that the Balinese could never get any understanding of "what their religion is all about" until they could read their canonical scriptures clearly shows that he does not understand at all what Balinese "religion" is. Hooykaas does not commit such a basic mistake, although both he, the philologist, and Geertz, the anthropologist, share the same Western prejudice in favor of written books. But Hooykaas objects at least to the expression "holy writings" (page 239) which Geertz uses freely. In fact, Hooykaas objects on several counts to Geertz' uses of "holy" and "sacred"—expressions, says Hooykaas quite rightly, that are "highly laden technical terms from the field of divinity/theology and should not be used easily." Geertz replies that this reflects on Hooykaas' "common sense," which reminds us of the Polish philosopher Leon Chwisteck who once remarked that a people's "common sense" expresses their deepest prejudices. All these errors are amusing and entertaining, but Geertz' error has in addition far-reaching implications. For if a people can get no understanding of what their religion is all about without reading their canonical scriptures, the Indians must have been ignorant about their religion for the better part of 2,500 years.[7]

We have seen that Tambiah was not averse to introducing a bit of technical jargon even if it is not always clear what good it does. Geertz goes much further and likes to flirt with contemporary ideas whatever their nature or provenance. The "hermeneutic circle" is as dear to him as "deep structure," though "deep play" has nothing to do with the latter; moreover, "deep structure" is a technical term with a very precise meaning whereas "deep play" is a nice way of expressing the claim Geertz first made and then abandoned, as we have just seen. In linguistics, a "deep structure" is an abstract underlying syntactic structure, which has to meet certain conditions of well-formedness, and which is postulated in order

to provide a starting point for derivations of "surface structures" with the help of rules that also meet specific conditions of wellformedness. In Geertz, "deep play" is an activity that seems innocuous and irrelevant, but that in fact expresses important issues (such as, in the case of the Balinese cockfight, honor and status). However, this terminology has no interesting implications as in the case of linguistics: for while Chomsky and his followers studied deep structures in order to find universal structures, which underlie all human languages, on Geertz' view "there may be no interesting general laws of culture, or of anthropology, to discover" (Lieberson 1984, 45; cf. Geertz 1985). "Thick description," similarly, is a spin-off from Gilbert Ryle, as Geertz acknowledges, but without the subtleties that Ryle attached to what is after all a piece of semantic observation that stands in need of a theoretical analysis—an analysis that neither Ryle nor Geertz made any attempt at providing.

The emphasis on religion and accordingly on *meaning* that we meet with in Geertz' later work raises a host of philosophical problems. We have seen in the first section how logicians and linguists have tried to come to terms with problems of meaning. This can be done provided we are working within a theoretical framework that is well developed—as are logical syntax and semantics. But ideas or phrases taken out of their (theoretical) context will never be helpful, as even a minimum of analysis can demonstrate.

Let us consider the idea from the confines or suburbs of communication theory that has especially appealed to Geertz, as we have already seen, of "a message sunk in the medium." Now, a message is always sent in order to convey meaning; a meaningless message is no message. A message also needs a medium, by means of which it is conveyed—e.g., a telephone. Let us take the simple example of a message left on my telephone answering machine, saying: "Mr. W. will not come this afternoon." What would it mean, in such a context, to refer to that message as "sunk in the medium?" It seems to convey something like: there is no message apart from and beyond the medium. In other words, the message that Mr. W. will not come has disappeared in the medium, viz., the telephone. Ordinarily, a telephone message is a message sent through a telephone. The expression "sunk in the medium" sug-

gests that the telephone message is not independent of the
telephone; in fact, in the limiting case, when the message is com-
pletely ''sunk,'' the telephone is all of the message. There are not
two entities, message and medium; there is only one left. But this
does not make any sense, unless it merely means that there *is* no
message, but that we have a substance that is interpreted as a
medium but that is not a medium through which anything passes:
the telephone interpreted as a message by itself. Like someone ar-
riving home, seeing his telephone and exclaiming: it must be that
Mr. W. has telephoned and left the message that he will not come
this afternoon! But since there is no message, this exclamation is
mere fantasy—an expression of disappointment, perhaps, or a
wish—that has nothing to do with either medium or message.

It is likely that Geertz did not have telephones in mind when he
invoked the idiom; but the communication engineers who intro-
duced the terminology were very much concerned with such media.
It is accordingly unclear to what extent any part of their theory ap-
plies to anthropology. Why, then, should Geertz wish to make use
of such unhelpful constructions, that become obscure as soon as
they are detached from their original context? There are several
possible answers, but the best one can do is study illustrations he
provides himself. Geertz refers to *poiesis*, ''making'' or ''doing,'' as
such an activity where the message is ''sunk in the medium.'' What
he means, apparently, is that it is impossible to do justice to a poem
by formulating its meaning as something separate from the par-
ticular form in which it has been expressed in the poem. But why
emphasize meaning at all? Why not accept what poets say them-
selves, namely, that poems are made not with ideas (meanings) but
with words? If one starts with the primacy of meaning, and then
picks on a particular way of expressing it, one is finally forced to
insist that, in some cases, the meaning is not to be separated from
its particular expression. It is obviously preferable from a
methodological point of view to proceed differently, and to accept
a poem as a datum that may be interpreted on one or more levels,
as the need arises, and without ignoring the concrete formal struc-
ture which is in any case part of it. That method has been put to
good use by linguistic interpreters of poetry, e.g., Roman Jakob-
son. Such interpretations show that the formal structure of a poem

makes a specific contribution to the explanation of its expressive power. Each piece of analysis that Jakobson has given contains such a specific discovery.

Geertz believes that art cannot be understood by a formal structural analysis of "sounds, images, volumes, themes, or gestures" (1983, 96). Such statements, however, are uninteresting as well as unconvincing. They are uninteresting because they can never be demonstrated, and unconvincing because in specific cases they have already been refuted. Moreover, such positive cases of analysis as were given, for example, by Jakobson, may lead to a general theory, unlike any belief that "it cannot be done."

I have spent some time on this discussion about poetry because it throws light on the problems in anthropology we have been discussing. The study of ritual deals with *activities*, and *poiesis* is the general word in Greek for "activity." *Poiesis* corresponds to Sanskrit *karman*, from the root *kṛ-*, "do," "make," which signifies "activity" and in particular "ritual activity." The corresponding Latin is *actum*, "done," the past passive participle of *agere*, "to do." The plural *acta*, "(things) done," corresponds to Greek *dromena*, "activities," which also refers especially to ritual activities.

In ritual we are primarily dealing with sounds and acts, and these correspond to each other. Our main confusions in this area are due to the facts that "sound" reminds us of language, and that "act" seems to be something simple. About sound and language I have said enough, but with regard to acts it should be emphasized that they are not simple. I can illustrate this no better than by quoting Austin (1961, 126-127): "The beginning of sense, not to say wisdom, is to realize that 'doing an action,' as used in philosophy, is a highly abstract expression—it is a stand-in used in the place of any (or almost any?) verb with a personal subject, in the same sort of way that 'thing' is a stand-in for any (or when we remember, almost any) noun substantive, and 'quality' a stand-in for the adjective ... So we come easily to think of our behavior over any time, and of a life as a whole, as consisting of doing now action A, next action B, then action C, and so on, just as elsewhere we come to think of the world as consisting of this, that and the other substance or material thing, each with its properties ... If we are to continue to use this expression in sober philosophy, we need to ask such

questions as: Is to sneeze to do an action? Or is to breathe, or to
see, or to checkmate, or each one of countless others? ... Further
we need to realize that even the 'simplest' named actions are not
so simple—certainly are not the mere making of physical move-
ments, and to ask what more then, comes in (intentions? conven-
tions?) and what does not (motives?), and what is the detail of the
complicated internal machinery we use in 'acting'—the receipt of
intelligence, the appreciation of the situation, the invocation of
principles, the planning, the control of execution and the rest.''
And in another essay, published in the same volume (page 224),
Austin writes: ''Philosophers at least are too apt to assume that an
action is always in the last resort the making of a physical move-
ment, whereas it's usually, at least in part, a matter of conven-
tion.''

It might seem at first sight that anthropologists would be the last
to make the latter mistake; after all, they are not (or rarely) inspired
by the physical sciences and are professionally interested in ''con-
ventions.'' However, they do tend to assume, mistakenly, like
many other practitioners of the humanities and the social sciences,
that actions must be done intentionally, purposefully, and mean-
ingfully, and must therefore possess a meaning or even incorporate
a message that someone wishes to send us. To see to what extent
this may be true we have to introduce an alternative hypothesis,
and we can do hardly better than compare it to the rival theory that
some actions, like some movements of nature, are not so caused or
motivated, but are due to chance. Since the problem, thus for-
mulated, is still extremely general, let us restrict its discussion to
our specific context of *rule-governed, ritual activity*. Now, we have
already met with two kinds of evidence illustrating the role played
by chance in ritual contexts. I shall refer to them as *external* and *inter-
nal* chance developments.

External chance developments arise when different cultures or
features of different cultures come together by change and combine
into new structures. We have seen such elements—''Hindu,''
''Buddhist,'' ''Muslim,'' ''animist''—come together and form
''mixtures,'' ''amalgams,'' ''totalities,'' ''syncretisms''—what-
ever scholars have called them—in Thailand, Sri Lanka, Java and
Bali, and we could adduce similar instances from other areas of

South, Southeast and East Asia. Although these combinations can sometimes be explained from or at least against a historical background, they are obviously not developments that may be described as intentional or meaningful activities. They are chance encounters. That they can be combined at all is due to the fact that the resulting structures are ritual. There are hardly any restrictions as to the combination of ritual acts with each other. We can combine the making of an oblation with the singing of a song, the killing of an animal, the lighting of a candle or the crossing of a bridge. Doctrines or beliefs, on the other hand, do not equally easily combine because they have to be consistent with each other in order to do so. We conclude that the development of ritual structures from external elements is often due to chance.

Internal chance developments arise within a ritual tradition as in the cases discussed in the second section where the verse of Rigveda 9.1.1 with its various ritual applications yielded different examples of change events, which cannot be explained in terms of intention, purpose or meaning. In each case the verse was associated with a rite for no apparent reason—like the windblown seed that settles on a particular spot. One could not go so far as to claim that, on each of these three occasions, *any* other verse would do; but there are certainly many verses that could be used. We conclude that the development of ritual structures through internal elements is often due to chance.

There are connexions between external and internal chance developments, but we cannot pursue this topic without carrying out specific investigations into the rules and kinds of rule that are involved. In both cases, the starting points are arbitrary collections of elements, subsequently combined into structures according to specific rules. The specificity of these rules and structures suggests that they conform to pre-existent patterns that are genetically or biologically determined. Finally, such structures are provided with a variety of meanings and semantic interpretations, a process that may continue indefinitely.

We have seen that ritual may be independent of religion. Can it also be independent of culture? If culture is always and entirely meaningful, none of its features could be due to chance. In that case, culture would be a unique development within man, entirely

distinct from the rest of his biological nature. If culture, on the other hand, contains features that are due to chance, it is in that respect similar to other biological phenomena. In order to decide which of these alternative views is nearer to the truth, we have to proceed from empirical evidence and at the same time be careful not to get entangled in conceptual confusions.

Discussions on culture and nature are more often inspired by metaphysical issues than by empirical data. In some cases, however, definite conclusions have been established, and they do not always point in the same direction. The recent debates on animal language have clearly led to the conclusion that animals, although certainly capable of communication with each other and thus of conveying messages and information, do not possess language in the human sense. The human animal, thus characterized by language, is often actually obsessed by it; but that does not imply that every activity he engages in is language-like, and accordingly meaningful. Unless we can show that in all cases they are not, we must therefore allow the possibility that some human activities are meaningless and governed by chance. To construct a world of meaning where there is none is mythology and not a substitute for finding the truth. Ritual ceremonies provide the unbiased observer with so many unexplained mysteries, that it is likely that we should conclude that some are simply due to chance. We have found two kinds of evidence that clearly supports such a conclusion.

Our evidence has been drawn from Asia, but if relevant, it must also occur elsewhere. Geertz' Bali book provides an example, together with a final illustration of his own bias. For Geertz does not like chance, and when the evidence clearly points at it, he looks the other way. In a note in the Bali book (page 216), he quotes the following passage from Giesey (1960), a student of royal funerals in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century France: "Time and time again … I have emerged with the conviction that some crucial innovation in the ceremonial first occurred quite haphazardly … and later generations when re-enacting it embellished it with clear-cut symbolism. This is to say, on the level of events themselves, chance frequently reigned; but symbolic forms affected the thought …". Geertz agrees with this "picture of irregular evolution … regularized by post hoc interpretation and adjustment," but he adds, significantly: "'chance,' I think, is not quite the right word."

What is remarkable about Giesey's formulations (which include "haphazardly" as well as "chance") is not that they simply picture "irregular evolution," but that they closely resemble biological explanations—presumably without any knowledge of such types of analysis on the part of Giesey (since otherwise he would doubtless have mentioned it). For "crucial innovations in the ceremonial first occurring quite haphazardly ... later embellished with clear-cut symbolism" is strikingly similar to "variations arising by chance ... later selected in accordance with the demands of the environment." The latter expression has been used to characterize those fundamental tenets of Darwinism that have not been modified or abandoned in the expanded versions of Darwinism that took shape in the 1930's and 1940's (Stebbins and Ayala 1985, 72). When a *biological* explanation of a *ritual* fact is so plausible in terms of available methodologies, it makes good scientific sense to pursue it and not to take refuge in semantic theories that are unsubstantiated.

V

Conclusion

In his famous book on European literature and the Latin middle ages, Ernst Robert Curtius devotes a long chapter to the *topos* of "the book as symbol." Here he discusses the idea that nature is a book that needs to be deciphered—a favorite theme of speculation for more than a millenium of European history. Today it is no longer found in the natural sciences, and "book" has been replaced by the more abstract "language." In this form it continues to be a common metaphor in the humanities and the social sciences. Even when only half explicit in such phrases as "the lexicon of carvings" or "the grammar of ritual," it moulds our understanding—and confounds it.

I have tried to show that the sounds of religion are not sounds of an unknown language that has to be deciphered, but are features of ritual systems that do not express meanings but that are governed by rules. Our confusions in interpreting these systems are largely caused by the disoncerting concatenation of two independent and unrelated facts: ritual systems are like language in that

they are governed by rules, but unlike language in that they do not express meanings. For their study, understanding and analysis, such systems accordingly require syntactic theories that deal with rules, not semantic theories that deal with meanings. The *śrauta sūtras* have paved the way.

Anthropologists and scholars of religion have provided ritual with a variety of semantic interpretations, not always consistent with each other. In this they resemble indigenous traditions of ritual interpretation such as we find in the Brāhmaṇa literature. Geertz' work is instructive because it exhibits many levels of confusion between ritual and language. This comes about because Geertz combines a great gift for ethnographic description with theoretical indecision and a dislike of biology. These features have been commented on in the review of Lieberson (1984) that I have already quoted (and to which my attention was first drawn by Ginni Ishimatsu), and they are further illustrated and confirmed by Geertz himself in a recent piece in *The Times Literary Supplement* (1985) entitled ''Waddling in'' or ''What are anthropologists doing?''

Unlike Geertz, Milton Singer is clear on theory. His weakness is—songs (so much for etymology). Sharing with Geertz the ''Chicago dogma'' that ''cultures are systems of symbols and meanings,'' Singer has immediately drawn the inescapable conclusion that we need semantic systems to study cultures. For Singer, the chief question for anthropology is: what kind of semantics? Says he (Singer 1984, 49): ''Culture theory now confronts two major options—whether to become a branch of *semiology*, as Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, and Leach have proposed, or to follow a Peircean *semiotics*, as Margaret Mead, Sebeok, and Geertz have done to some extent.'' Singer himself opts for the latter alternative.

Ritual data do not face us with such a choice because their analysis does not stand in need of semantics. Like rocks or trees, ritual acts and sounds may be provided with meaning, but they do not require meanings and do not exist for meaning's sake. I am inclined to conclude from these observations that ritual acts and sounds belong to a domain of biology that goes beyond man. This is supported by the data of animal ritualization and by such curious facts as the similarity between mantras and bird songs (which is

more distinctive than that between mantras and linguistic expressions: Staal 1985c). This conclusion does not imply that culture cannot be a system of meanings and symbols. But such a definition of culture would imply that ritual is not a feature of culture. I am not disinclined to accept that implication since I am already familiar with cases where ritual is not part of religion.

The alternative is to abandon the definition of culture in terms of meanings or symbols. In that case, the gap between nature and culture narrows, and while language remains on the side of culture, ritual remains a feature common to both. We may still want to say, in a number of cases, that people have interpreted this, that, and the other; but matters of interpretation need not be singled out for special attention. I am more favorably disposed to this second alternative. It is closer to the Indian distinction between "forest" and "village," which has always been floating. Also, some hors-d'oeuvres contain raw meat as well as cooked eggs; yet cooking an egg is not interpreting it.

Geertz' invocation of hermeneutics is not improper: both share a marriage of thick description with thin theory. Hermeneutics is therefore closer to literature than it is to science, and Geertz does not mind that. His own prose is clearly superior to what we are generally served with in this area—one need not go as far as Merleau-Ponty or Gadamer to ascertain it. Simply listen to how Geertz depicts the Balinese as "perpetually weaving intricate palm-offerings, preparing elaborate ritual meals, decorating all sorts of temples, marching in massive processions, and falling into sudden trances..." (above, page 73). Such descriptions *are* helpful for they remind us that the Nambudiri Rigvedins, too, spend their days and evenings reciting hymns while the Yajurvedins and *vaidikas*, "Vedics" in general, go from village to village, intent on performing their rites. The Sāmavedins are always seeking opportunities to sing their songs, and do so on every occasion imaginable. We may think of that as "the sound of religion." They think of it as *karman*, "rule-governed activity".

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³ I cannot expatiate on these Thai brahmins who are marginal to Tambiah's subject; but they add another Indian element to the amalgam of Buddhist and Thai traditions; cf. Filliozat 1965 and Sarma 1972.

⁴ It is only on these pages (486-487) that I found two Freudian slips: "heterosexual" for "homosexual," and "superordinate male" (!) for "subordinate male."

⁵ Such cultural diffusion or Indianization is familiar to Indologists. Another ceremony from the Agnicayana, "Flow of Wealth" (*vasor dhārā*), turns up in Nepal, centuries later, as a popular Buddhist goddess.

⁶ Note that this is different from Tambiah, who started with concrete entities (amulets) and postulated an interpretation; Geertz starts with (religious or political) meanings and offers them as interpretations for a variety of concrete entities.

⁷ Even in Islam, "reading canonical scriptures" is not a prerequisite for being a good Muslim: Quran means "recitation" and "the main stress is always on recitation and on the rote learning necessary to it" (observed by Geertz himself in Morocco: 1983, 110-112).

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JESUS' ENTRY INTO PARINIRVĀṆA:
MANICHAEAN IDENTITY IN
BUDDHIST CENTRAL ASIA*

HANS-J. KLIMKEIT

In the Parthian Manichaean fragment M 104 from Turfan in Central Asia we read: "Awake, bretheren, chosen ones, on this day of spiritual salvation, the 14th [day] of the month of Mihr, when Jesus, the son of God, entered into *parinirvāṇa*."[1] It has been pointed out that this text must originally have been written in Syriac since the date given for the death of Jesus "is mechanically 'translated' from the 14th of the Syriac month Nisan to the 14th of the Iranian month Mihr."[2] The use of the Parthian verb *parinibrad*, "went into *parinirvāṇa*" for Jesus' entry into the Realm of Light points to the marked tendency on the part of Eastern Manichaeism to adapt to Buddhist parlance and, moreover, to transpose Gnostic concepts into those of the Indian religion. This it could do with a good conscience, since the Manichaean religion had much in common with Buddhism. As opposed to the Nestorian Christians in Central Asia, the "resurrection" of Christ as well as the "resurrection" of the individual, i.e. his salvation, was to the Manichaeans a spiritual matter.[3] Hence, the day of resurrection, according to our text, is hailed as "this day of spiritual salvation" (*gyānēn bōxtagīft*). As we learn from the Sogdian Turfan fragment C I,[4] the Buddhists in Central Asia had also found the Christian idea of resurrection objectionable, implying, as it does, a positive assessment of the body and of corporeality in general. The Sogdian and Turkish Nestorian texts from the silk road mirror a marked emphasis on the resurrection,[5] and the Manichaeans would have repudiated the Christians on this point as well as the Buddhists, as the body was not to be transformed, but to be relinquished, for it was full of negative powers, lead by greed and lust. In a Turkish text from Turfan (T M 298),[6] reflecting in its own way the adoption of Buddhist imagery, it says: "This body in which you are clothed, regard it and estimate it thus: It is completely made and fashioned of deceit

and deception, falseness and treacherousness. Within it are many powers (*küčlüglär*), senses (*köngülär*) and forces (*biliglär*) which bubble up and are in constant motion. They are like the great ocean *samudra*, where there is much turmoil and confusion.'' Not only the human body, but also the world, for which the Buddhist concept of *saṃsāra* could readily be used, is an ocean of distress which has to be crossed and left behind, in order to enter that World of Light which is the completely transcendent, true abode of the pure, divine spirit, and which is hence readily equated with *nirvāṇa* or *parinirvāṇa*. In Parthian Manichaeism there is a whole set of liturgical texts called the ''*parinirvāṇa*-hymns'' (*parniβbrānig bāšāhān*) which commemorate Mani's death and entry into the Realm of Light and which were sung at the Bema-festival.[7] As such hymns are dated in years after Mani's passing away, probably a new hymn of this type was composed every year, indicating that the Buddhist notion remained alive and was not dismissed. And even in the so-called ''crucifixion-hymns'' (*dārūβaδagīftīg bāšāhān*) from which the first quotation was taken, as well as in a text entitled ''the proclamation of the crucifixion'' (*dārūβaδgīftīg wifrās*; M4570), Mani's death, termed his ''crucifixion'' and likened to Jesus' death on the cross, is also described as his entry into *parinirvāṇa*.[8]

A basis and justification for the identification of Manichaean concepts with Buddhist terminology is found in the way Mani perceived himself: namely as the final incarnation of the ''true Apostle'' who had adopted flesh not only in specific personages of the Old Testament—as was wide-spread Gnostic belief, a belief also held by the Judaeo-Christian Elchasaite community where he grew up,[9]—but also in the great religious leaders Jesus, Zoroaster and Buddha.[10] Though he termed himself ''the Apostle of Jesus Christ'',[11] he could also see in Buddha one of his predecessors and could regard his own teaching as a fulfillment of Buddhism as well as Christianity and Zoroastrianism. In the Middle Persian Turfan fragment M 5794 he claims that his religion is ''more comprehensive and better'' than the other earlier religions because it includes ''all scriptures, the wisdom and the parables'' of the former faiths.[12] Hence the later inclusion of not only Buddhist concepts but also Buddhist textual and artistic material was legitimated. In a dialogue between the saviour, ''Jesus the Splendour'', and his *alter*

ego, "Jesus the Boy", the bound light, the soul crying for redemption (i.e. Parthian fragment M 42), the boy remembers the time of the appearance of Buddha Śākyamuni and says: "He [Buddha] opened the door of salvation to the fortunate souls that he redeemed among the Indians."[13] Then the saviour reminds the boy: "When he [Buddha] went into Nirvana, he told you, 'Await Maitreya here!'"[14] For the Manichaeans, Mani was Maitreya, as he was the Comforter promised by Jesus in John 15,26, and his reappearance on earth was expected at the end of days.

Whether Mani had already understood himself as Maitreya, we do not know. But his interest in the Buddhist world is revealed by the fact that his first great missionary journey took him in 241/42 A.D. to the Indus valley and adjacent areas in today's Beluchistan, where he converted the Buddhist Tūrān Shāh. In Manichaean hagiography he does so after performing a miracle before the king by appearing in mid-air together with a former *ardāv*, a "just one", and discussing with him matters of religion.[15] After it is asserted that of various things the most excellent is the wisdom of the Buddha, the king hails him as the Buddha and says: "Of all these things you are the greatest and brightest, for in truth, you are yourself the Buddha."[16]

This Parthian document makes it quite clear that the Eastern Manichaeans, at any rate, saw in Mani Buddha himself and that they regarded his "insight and wisdom" (*xrad [ud] *žīrīft* ~ MP. *xrad ud dānišn* in the *Šābuhragān* and *wihīh ud dānišn* in M 5794 I v. 12) as equal to or even superior to that of Śākyamuni. In their conscious adaptation to Buddhist notions they could regard especially Mār Ammō, Mani's disciple who was sent by the founder to Parthian Eastern Iran and the Kushan realm, as the founder of the Eastern Dīnāwarīya sect. One reason is certainly Mār Ammō's readiness to employ Buddhist terminology. In the hymns ascribed to him as well as to other Parthian writers we already find a number of Indian Buddhist loan words such as *mrn*, death < Skr. *maraṇa*, *nrḥ*, hell < Skr. *naraka*, *krm*, deed < Skr. *karma* and *zmbwdyg*, world < Skr. *jambudvīpa*.[17]

Hence the contact of Eastern Manichaeism with Buddhism determined its whole history from the very beginning. Therefore it is not surprising that the Manichaean religion in Central Asia was

widely receptive to Buddhist forms and contents. As to how exten-
sive the impact of this contact was on Buddhism is an interesting
question in itself which we cannot discuss here.

As indicated, the basic precondition for the Manichaean adop-
tion of Buddhist notions was an analogous understanding of self
and world, a comparable *Daseinsverständnis*. For both religions, the
world is a place of woe and suffering. It is controlled, in the case
of Manichaeism, by demonic powers, though their might has been
broken by the "Living Spirit", who fashioned from the bodies of
the slain demons the earth and the heavens. And yet they determine
man's existence, as samsaric powers determine man's fate in Bud-
dhism: hence the equation of the negative Gnostic concept of *kosmos*
with *saṃsāra* in Parthian, Sogdian, Turkish and Chinese texts. For
both religions, furthermore, the way out of this woeful worldly ex-
istence is a certain knowledge, a *gnosis*. This word is actually
rendered as *prajñā*, or rather its corresponding terms, in Central
Asian languages (e.g. *bilgä bilig* in Turkic). Of course the content
of that *gnosis* differs in both religions, and it is here that we shall
have to seek the specific Manichaean *logos* or *nomos*, its own identi-
ty, being aware that even the Greek term *nomos* found its way into
Sogdian (as *nwm*), Turkish (as *nom*) and further into Mongolian (as
nom), to render what the Buddhists call the *dharma*. What, then, is
the *nomos* of Manichaeism? Did it remain, in core, unchanged, or
was its very essence diluted by the adoption of Buddhist terms?
Before we can answer this question we shall have to look at the pro-
cess of "Buddhization", as it is discernible in successive stages in
various Central Asian languages. Being unfamiliar with Chinese,
I shall have to leave the assessment of Chinese Manichaean texts
to the sinologist, referring to them only in passing. H. Schmidt-
Glintzer speaks of "the Buddhist apparel" ("das buddhistische Ge-
wand") of Chinese Manichaeism,[18] and we shall be able to observe
the same in Central Asian texts. Before embarking on a review of
Buddhist forms and contents in East Iranian and Central Asian
Manichaeism, it should be remarked that these can be traced in
three different areas, 1. in the adoption of Buddhist terminology,
2. in the adoption of Buddhist narrative motifs and 3. in the adop-
tion of Buddhist artistic motifs. We cannot give equal attention to
all areas here and shall therefore concentrate on the first field.

In Middle Persian Manichaean texts we find practically no Bud-
dhist terms whatsoever, even though some documents in this
language were written at a later stage in Central Asia. The Parthian
material however reflects a certain degree of contact with Buddhist
thought. The various Indian Buddhist loan words in Manichaean
Parthian have recently been studied by W. Sundermann and N.
Sims-Williams.[19] As we have seen, this process of inclusion of Bud-
dhist loan words sets in with the literary activity of Mār Ammō who
was active as a missionary in partly Buddhist Eastern Iran and the
former Kushan realm, furthermore in Merv, where Soviet ar-
chaeologists have discovered a large Buddhist stūpa and sanctuary,
dating, perhaps, from the 2nd century A.D.[20] (Merv was also to
become one of the main Christian centers along the silk road.) That
contact with Buddhist circles was established even on a higher social
level in the former Kushan area is highlighted by the fact that the
Sassanian Kushan Shāh Pērōz who issued coins with Zoroastrian
and Buddhist emblems including the Buddha figure was at the
same time one of the most prominent well-wishers and even pro-
moters of Manichaeism.[21]

The great success of Manichaeism in East Iran is echoed in later
Manichaean hagiography. As Mani had been hailed as the Buddha
by the Tūrān Shāh in India, he was also hailed as the same by a
certain Gwndyš, who, upon meeting him and hearing his explana-
tion of parables, exclaimed: ''And now I know in truth that you are
the Buddha and the Apostle (*but ud frēštag*).''[22] This meeting prob-
ably took place on East Iranian soil, if not in India. The formula-
tion is characteristic of various Parthian documents. The Buddha
is named *beside* the Apostle, his title is added to that of the
Messenger of Light. In passing it should be remarked that Mani is
also invoked as a bodhisattva,[23] although this lower dignity is
ascribed to him more seldom. He is regarded as the Buddha, or at
least as a Buddha, for the Parthian texts also speak of Buddhas in
the plural. In a prophecy ascribed to Mani in which he foresees the
Eastern expansion of his religion and emphasizes the special bless-
ing resting on the Eastern Church, he promises his envoys that
''Jesus the Vivifier'' (*yišō zīndakkar*), whom they have chosen, will
himself protect them ''through his Buddhas and Light Apostles''
(*butān ud frēštagānrōšnān*).[24]

In the Parthian texts certain Church leaders also attain the digni-
ty of a Buddha. Thus in a commemoration-hymn composed after
the death of Mār Zaku, one of the great missionaries to the East
who died ca. 300 A.C., the leader is invoked with the words: ''O
strong one, valiant one, mighty one, who attained a throne like all
apostles, Buddhas and deities.''[25] Here again the Buddhas are
named beside the apostles (*frēštagān*) and the deities of
Manichaeism. Of course other titles mirroring Indian usage are
also ascribed to Mār Zaku. Thus he is called the great ''caravan-
leader'' (Pth. *srtw'* < Skr. *sārthavāha*) which is reminiscent of the
protective function of Avalokiteśvara for those travelling along the
silk road.[26]

It is understandable that not only Buddhist titles but central con-
cepts crept into Manichaean literature as well. Thus in a fictitious
letter of Mani to Mār Ammō, whose author belonged to the
Eastern Dīnāwarīya school, it is Mani who promulgates Buddhist
values.[27] He exhorts the devout (*dēnāvar*) to exercise meditation
(*andēšišn*), to collect merit (Pth. *pwn* < Skr. *punya*) as the only thing
valuable in life and to act according to the given situation, at times
appearing as a teacher and lord, like the Sumeru mountain, at
other times being humble like a student or slave.[28] It is quite clear
that this is a reference to skillful means (Skr. *upāya-kauśalya*), and
indeed, the polarity of wisdom and skillfulness (*prajñā* and *upāya*) is
made all the more explicit in M 42, where Jesus tells the boy that
even Dībat (i.e. Dilbat, the Babylonian name for Venus) envies
him because of the skill and wisdom which he has received from
Buddha.[29]

The lower spiritual beings, even the *yakṣas* and *rākṣasas*, also find
entry into the Parthian texts. In a Parthian amulet (M 1202) stem-
ming from Bactria and probably written in the 6th century, part of
a Manichaean *yakṣa* catalogue is preserved.[30] The fragment is close-
ly connected with Buddhist texts like the *Mahāmāyūrī* and the
Candragarbha-Sūtra. It is introduced by an invocation of Jesus and
Mani: ''... in thy name, through thy will, at thy command and
through thy power, Lord Jesus Christ. In the name of the Lord
Mani, the redeemer (*anjīwag*), the Apostle of the gods (*yazdān
frēštag*), the praised and blessed one who destroys all the demons
(*dēwān*) and powers of darkness.'' Then the four archangels and a

number of angels of the Jewish traditions are invoked to destroy all
manners of Iranian and Indian demons. Finally, a number of *yakṣas*
are mentioned including Viśvapāṇi, who inhabits Peshawar (Pth.
Puškawur (*pwškwr*) ~ Skr. Puruṣapura), controls the fifth hour of
the day, has 20,000 sons and eats salty food. This applies to all
other *yakṣas* as well, to whom are ascribed certain areas where they
live including Kashmir and *čīnestān* ("China"), certain hours of the
day, a great number of sons and a particular type of food, in a man-
ner quite equivalent to the named Buddhist scriptures. Certainly
Viśvapāṇi is not a *yakṣa* in well-known Buddhist texts, yet Henning,
the editor of the text, rightly remarks: "As his colleague *Vajrapāṇi*
appears frequently as a *yakṣa*, ... there is no reason why *Viśvapāṇi*
should not play such a homely role too."[31]

The Manichaean *yakṣa* catalogue, introduced by an evocation of
Jesus and Mani and naming as it does diverse regions in north-
western India as well as the *yakṣas* presiding there, indicates that the
contact between the Gnostic religion and Buddhism in the Indo-
Iranian borderland must have been much more alive than the few
pieces of evidence that have come down to us would suggest. The
contact can be traced more markedly in Central Asia proper where
especially Sogdian and Turkish texts attest to its vivacity.

In the Sogdian texts which are to some extent translations from
the Parthian, the Buddhist connections are more marked. We
observe here an almost regular *Interpretatio Buddhica* of Gnostic
terms. This is indicated by the fact that the Buddhas are not only
mentioned in equal rank beside the apostles and messengers of
light, but that apostleship is interpreted in terms of Buddhahood,
even though the Sogdian language does possess words for the apos-
tle or messenger (*fryštyy*) and the "Messenger of Light" (*rxwšny
βr'yšt'k*). In the Sogdian account of Mār Ammō's mission to the
East (in M 18220 = T M 389a), he receives certain instructions
from Mani who refers not to earlier apostles and messengers, but
to earlier Buddhas. Mani says: "Every time when the Buddhas who
raise men from [spiritual] death descended to earth and when they
*sent their disciples ... to preach in different places", these disciples
kept the doctrine (?) "in their memories and in their minds."[32]
And the whole process of Buddhization is highlighted in this text
when it says that Mār Ammō completely explained to noblemen

and rulers "the Buddhahood (*pwtty'kh*) of the Apostle of Light."[33]
And an unpublished Sogdian text refers to major Manichaean
deities, the five sons of Primal Man, as "the five Buddhas of the
three times."[34] Accordingly, Chinese texts refer to the "five classes
of Light-Buddhas" and speak of all the Manichaean deities as "all
the Buddhas of the three generations."[35]

Whereas Mani is called "God Buddha" (βγyy *bwtyy* ~ Uig. *tngri
burxan*) in Sogdian texts, he also appears frequently as Maitreya.
He is directly addressed as such. And in an invocation which is "a
magical variation of the term Maitreya,"[36] Maitreya, "the God
Mār Mani" and "the God Messiah" (i.e. Jesus) are placed on par
in apposition to each other. In a hymn for the Bema-festival, where
an image of Mani was placed on an altar and addressed in solemn
verses sung by the community, it says: "Buddha Maitreya has
come, Mār Mani, the Apostle; he brought victory [i.e. salvation]
from God, the Just."[37] Although Mani, as Maitreya, is present at
every Bema-festival, his return to earth is expected at the end of
days, and hence he is true future Buddha, who is clearly set apart
from a false Maitreya.[38]

Just as there is an *Interpretatio Buddhica* of the redeeming gods, so,
in the same way, Buddhist symbolic terms are used to explain the
elements of light which are imprisoned in matter and which also
constitute man's soul: they have to be freed from the mire of the
samsaric world, for they represent gold covered with mud, or pearls
clutched by dragonic forces. Whereas the Chinese Manichaean
texts referred to this divine element in man as his "Buddha
nature", the Sogdians equated the notion with another Buddhist
concept. As the soul—like all elements of light in the world—consist
of five "limbs" (Pth. *handām*) which correspond cosmologically to
the five sons of Primal Man that are imprisoned in matter, the dark
principle, the notion of the "five divine elements" (Pth. *mahrāspan-
dān* ~ Sogd. *mrδ'spnt*) is "Buddhized". And whereas the Western
Manichaean tradition, according to St. Augustine, referred to the
imprisoned light as "the suffering Jesus" (*Jesus patibilis*), the
Eastern Manichaeans spoke, as we saw, of "the five Buddhas of
Light", or, more generally, of the "Buddha family" (*pwt'ny kwt'r
~ pwt'ny kwtr* [in Sogdian script] ~ Skr. *buddha gotra*).[39] And in cor-
respondence to the concept of *buddha gotra* they could also refer to

the divine light bound in matter as "the family (*gotra*) of Primal Man" (*xwrmuztyc kwṭr*) in M 358.[40] As this light is spread out in all the world, it is even present in dust. In a story narrated by Mani in the *Cologne Mani Codex*, Elchasaios, the founder of the sect in which Mani grew up, took dust into his hands, pressed it against his breast and said: "This is the flesh and blood of my Lord."[41] The imprisoned holy light is especially concentrated in certain plants and their fruits. It is partaken of in the sacred meal of the elect, and here, too, it is referred to as "the flesh and blood of Jesus." A Sogdian confessional prayer states: "Also in receiving the daily gifts from the divine table I did not seat myself with a thankful heart, thinking of the God Buddha [i.e. Mani] and men. I also failed to think (as I should) of the primal battle [i.e. of Primal Man with the forces of Darkness]. And this, too, did I not think about: 'Whom do I resemble now? What is it, that is eaten? ... Whose flesh and blood is it, that is eaten?'"[42] As the elect can release the light they have partaken of and refer it, by prayer and meditation, to its heavenly home, they return the gifts they have received to the Lord of Light. Thus it says in a Chinese Manichaean Hymn, in an exhortation to rescue the divine particles of light:

> "Seek precious treasures in the gloomy, deep sea of tortures,
> And run to offer them to the clean and pure Lord of Nirvāṇa;
> Save the severely wounded from ulcers and pain,
> And wash and cleanse the bright pearls from mud and urine;
> All the wonderful things which are received, as said by the Law,
> Are restored to the original Lord, dignified and solemn, clean and pure:
> And these are exactly the flesh and blood of Jesus."[43]

In Turkish texts, the word for Buddha, *burxan*, is again applied to Mani, Jesus and other saving gods. In the Turkish text T II D 171 Mani and the other prophets of old are referred to as "Mani Buddha and the other Buddha-Messengers" (*Mani burxan amari burxanlar bristilär*).[44] The Great Nous who leads the Church and inspires its bishops is called "the king of the whole Law" (*q(a)maγ nom iligi*), which corresponds to the Buddhist *dharmarāja*.[45] (The Buddhist connection is even expressed in such personal names as "Jesus *vajra*"!) In a Turkish fragment of the Manichaean "Book of Giants" (T M 423d) which was composed by Mani and is dependent upon Jewish Enochic literature, even Enoch, the Old Testa-

ment patriarch referred to in Gen. 5, 21ff, is termed a Buddha
(*burxan*), although the Manichaean Turks could have used the Ira-
nian term *frišti* (messenger), as would have been suitable in this case
and is done elsewhere.[46] In this text, the Palestinian Mt. Hermon
is transposed to become the Central Asian Kögman mountain. And
in a Sogdian fragment of the same ''Book of Giants'', Mt. Sumeru
is introduced and the offspring of the fallen angels, who, in Enochic
literature live in 36 cities, now live in 32 cities, like the *devas* around
the abode of Indra.[47]

   Turkish Manichaean documents, especially the prayers of con-
fession, are full of terms and phrases that have their analogies in
corresponding Buddhist texts.[48] The same is true of the colophones
to the sacred texts where the writer or donor transfers the merit ac-
quired by copying a holy book, or having it copied, to others, usual-
ly the king and certain living and deceased family members.[49] (We
find this practice even in the colophones to the Nestorian Turkish
texts.)[50] I shall take only one example from Turkish literature. In
the so-called ''Great Hymn to Mani''[51] which refers in the begin-
ning to ''the root [i.e. basic] *doctrine of noble Jesus'' (*aryayiša töz
nom),[52] the degree of Buddhist terminological usage is quite com-
parable to that of Chinese Manichaean texts. Here the Realm of
Light and the ultimate state of salvation is called ''the good *nirvāṇa*''
(v. 29), ''peaceful *nirvāṇa*'' (v. 118) or ''*parinirvāṇa*'' (Uig. *frnibran*,
v. 17).[53] It is referred to as ''the realm of the Buddhas'' (*burxanlar
uluš* ~ Skr. *buddhabhūmi*, v. 30, 115), or, in terms we find in Uighur
Buddhist texts, as ''the highest place'' (*üstünki yig orun*, v. 92), the
''place of immortality'' (*anošagan orṭu*, v. 116). And the state that
''the blessed with a pure heart'' attain is ''Arhathood'' (*arxant qutï*,
v. 79).

   However, not only the state of salvation, but also that of woe is
rendered into Buddhist terms. Repeatedly the world is referred to
here as *saṃsāra*, as ''cyclical *saṃsāra*'' or as ''terrifying *saṃsāra*'' (v.
10, 26, 28 etc.). Here sentient beings live in the five forms of ex-
istence known to Buddhism (*biš azun* ~ Skr. *pañca gati*), infected by
ignorance, hatred and ''many other *kleśas*'' (v. 17,18).

   Though overtly ''Buddhized'', the connection to the central
saviour figure of Jesus is not lost. Thus it says in v. 28:

> "We [came ?] ...
> In order to see the Buddha-like Sun God [i.e. Jesus] who resembles you [i.e.
>   Mani],
> [We], who were in the bonds of suffering,
> Were saved from this *saṃsāra*."

The next verse recalls the Buddhist exhortation to renounce the attachment to the world and to the objects of the senses (Uig. *fišay*):

> "To those attached to transient joys
> You [i.e. Mani] have *preached the incomparable true Law,
> You have led them out of the ocean of suffering
> And have brought them to the good *nirvāṇa*."

Finally Mani himself has attained the highest state of salvation in a Buddhist sense and has saved myriads of suffering beings from hellish existence. Thus it says in vers 36:

> "After the *four Buddhas [i.e. Seth (?), Jesus,
>   Zoroaster and Śākyamuni] you also descended (to earth),
> And attained complete incomparable Buddhahood
>   (*tüz *kärinčsiz burxan quti* ~ Skr. *anuttarasamyaksaṃbodhi*),
> Many myriads of living beings did you redeem,
> You freed them all from the dark hells."

These few examples which could greatly be multiplied may suffice to illustrate the extent of adaptation to Buddhist parlance. But it has become clear that this is more than a mere substitution of Gnostic terms by Buddhist ones. Basic notions of Buddhism were taken up and incorporated, and this is quite in accord with the artistic tradition as well where Buddhist motifs abound. On one Manichaean picture scroll, for instance, we can see—though badly preserved—a deity with a staff crowned by a cross of the type used by Nestorian Christians, but sitting on a lotus throne.[54] In front of him there kneels a boy, and there is reason to believe that the picture represents the conversation between Jesus and the boy referred to earlier.

Given such comprehensive borrowings, to what extent did Manichaeism as a Gnostic religion maintain its identity? A clue to this question is, I believe, its assimilation of Buddhist narrative material. A number of popular Buddhist stories is known to have been incorporated into Manichaean literature.[55] Though the material available is fragmentary and incomplete, we can say that central Buddhist narratives and parables were used by the

Manichaeans in their homilies. Thus the story of Buddha's three encounters, the encounter with a sick, old and a dead person, was known to them,[56] as well as, for instance, the story of the good and the bad prince (Kalyāṇaṃkara and Pāpaṃkara).[57] In Central Asia they even employed for their didactic purposes stories from the Indian *pañcatantra* cycle and from the fables of Esop.[58]

Significant, however, is the fact that the Manichaeans included in their repertoire myths, legends and parables of other religions and indigenous cultural areas, but that they gave to them an allegorical interpretation of their own. They "reproduced the narrative material, but decided themselves the pedagogical use thereof", says J. P. Asmussen.[59] This cause is even made explicit in the titles, as one can readily read: "[A parable with] explanation is (here) taught." The Parthian word used for "explanation", *wižēhišn* (from *wižēh-*, to teach), shows that the epimythion of the parable was a Manichaean interpretation of it.[60] This interpretation, however, was dictated by the *logos* or *nomos* of Manichaeism itself. In spite of all convergences between the two world religions, the Manichaeans retained the freedom to understand foreign materials—and certainly also terms—in their own Manichaean sense. Their basic doctrine was the teaching about the two principles and the three times. The two principles were Good and Evil, the three times the initial stage of separation of both, the present stage of their mixture and the future stage of their final separation. The complex Manichaean myth explaining this mechanism and ascribing to "Jesus the Splendour" a central role in the salvation process, remained alive up to the final extinction of Manichaeism in the 16th century. This myth is the content of the *gnosis* they aspired. Though Buddhist *prajñā* also led to a state beyond *kosmos/saṃsāra*, its content could hardly fit the dualistic scheme which the Manichaeans were never willing to relinquish. What the Manichaeans called "the jewel of the Gospel Law" (*ävnglium nom rtni*)[61] was laid down in Mani's writings, faithfully preserved to the end.

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    * A special word of thanks is due to Dr. W. Sundermann, Berlin, who gave valuable Iranistic information to the author and pointed out specific details indicated in the notes. I also thank Mr. Carlos Cooper for revising the English text stylistically.

    ¹ M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*. (Acta Iranica 9). Leiden 1975, p. 127 (text bx).

    ² *Ibid*. Dr. W. Sundermann reminds me that names of gods are also "mechanically translated" in the sense of a *Mitübersetzung*, as first pointed out by H. Lüders. Cf. R. Reitzenstein—H. H. Schaeder, *Studien zum antiken Synkretismus aus Iran und Griechenland*. Leipzig-Berlin 1926, p. 277, n. 1.

    ³ The term "resurrection" is used in this spiritual sense in various Manichaean passages. Cf. A. Böhlig, *Die Gnosis* III. *Der Manichäismus*. Zürich-Munich 1980, index, s.v. "auferstehen, auferstehen lassen, Auferstehung", p. 380.

    ⁴ O. Hansen, *Berliner sogdische Texte* I. (*APAW*, Phil.-hist. Kl. Nr. 10). Berlin 1941, p. 9; H.-J. Klimkeit, "Christentum und Buddhismus in der innerasiatischen Religionsbegegnung", *ZRGG* 33 (1981), pp. 214ff.

    ⁵ Klimkeit, *op.cit.*, pp. 213-220.

    ⁶ *Türk. Man.* III, 9.

    ⁷ Cf. J. L. R. Ort, *Mani. A Religio-Historical Description of his Personality*, Leiden 1967, pp. 238-243.

    ⁸ W. Sundermann, *Mitteliranische manichäische Texte kirchengeschichtlichen Inhalts*. (Berliner Turfantexte XI). Berlin 1981, p. 76 (Text 4a.18). Dr. W. Sundermann kindly tells me that the same work would also have been entitled "proclamation of the *parinirvāṇa*" (*parniβranig wifrās*). A text with this title is published *ibid.*, pp. 80f. (Text 4a.19). If, indeed, the titles referred to the same work, Christian and Buddhist terminology in this matter was interchangeable. In the Coptic *Homilies* there is a "narrative about the crucifixion" (*Manichäische Homilien*, ed. H. J. Polotsky. Stuttgart 1934, pp. 42ff.), as Sundermann points out to me.

    ⁹ A. Henrichs, "Mani and the Babylonian Baptists. A Historical Confrontation," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 77 (1973), pp. 54f.

    ¹⁰ *Kephalaia* 12,9ff; Turfan fragment M 42: text in Boyce, *Reader*, pp. 170-173 (text dc); W. B. Henning, "Ein manichäisches Henochbuch," (*SPAW*, Phil.-hist. Kl. 1934, V). Berlin 1934, pp. 3-4.

    ¹¹ Cf. Böhlig, *Gnosis* III, index s.v. "Apostel Jesu Christi", p. 379.

    ¹² Text in Boyce, *Reader*, pp. 29-30 (text a).

    ¹³ For the text of M 42 s. n. 10. English transl. in J. P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature*. (Persian Heritage Series, No. 22). Delmar, N.Y. 1975, p. 110.

    ¹⁴ Asmussen, *op.cit.*, pp. 110f.

    ¹⁵ Sundermann, *Texte*, p. 21.

    ¹⁶ *Ibid*.

    ¹⁷ Cf. J. P. Asmussen, *Xᵘāstvānīft. Studies in Manichaeism*. (Acta Theol. Danica, Vol. VII). Copenhagen 1965, p. 136.

    ¹⁸ H. Schmidt-Glintzer, "Das buddhistische Gewand des Manichäismus", in: W. Heissig and H.-J. Klimkeit (edd.), *Synkretismus in Zentralasien*. Wiesbaden 1986, pp. 76-90. Cf. also P. Bryder, *The Chinese Transformation of Manichaeism*. Lund (thesis) 1986.

    ¹⁹ W. Sundermann, "Die Bedeutung des Parthischen für die Verbreitung buddhistischer Wörter indischer Herkunft", *Altorientalische Forschungen* IX. Berlin 1982, pp. 99-113; N. Sims-Williams, "Indian Elements in Parthian and Sogdian", in: K. Röhrborn and W. Veenker (edd.), *Sprachen des Buddhismus in Zen-*

tralasien. (Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica, Vol. 16). Wiesbaden 1983, pp. 132-141.

²⁰ G. Koshelenko, "The Beginning of Buddhism in Margiana", *AOH* 14 (1968), pp. 175-183.

²¹ W. Henning, "Neue Materialien zur Geschichte des Manichäismus", *ZDMG* 90 (1936), p. 8; cf. Sundermann, *Texte*, p. 106, n. 7.

²² Sundermann, *Texte*, p. 89.

²³ Sundermann, "Die Bedeutung des Parthischen ...", p. 104.

²⁴ Sundermann, *Texte*, p. 134.

²⁵ Boyce, *Reader*, p. 140 (text ch).

²⁶ Boyce, *Reader*, p. 139. In the Chinese *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-Sūtra* the Buddhas are called "caravan-leaders". Cf. D. N. Mackenzie, *The Buddhist Sogdian Texts of the British Library*. (Acta Iranica 10, Textes et Mémoires, Vol. III). Leiden 1976, p. 35. In the *Lotus-Sūtra*, ch. XXIV, Avalokiteśvara appears as a caravan-leader. Cf. H. Kern, *The Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or the Lotus of the True Law*. (Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXI). Repr. Delhi 1965, p. 408.

²⁷ Over against Hennings and Boyces explanation of this text as a fictitious letter of Dīnāwarīya origin, there is H. H. Schaeders view, shared by W. Sundermann, that this is the imitation of a Buddhist *Jātaka*. (H. H. Schaeder, "Der Manichäismus nach neuen Funden und Forschungen", *Morgenland* 28 (1936), p. 96). As Dr. Sundermann lets me know, the title of the text can be reconstructed as "the proclamation about the Nāgas" (*nāgān wifrās*).

²⁸ *Mir. Man.* III, p. 855; Boyce, *Reader*, pp. 51f (text r).

²⁹ *Mir. Man.* III, p. 880; Boyce, *Reader*, p. 172; Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature*, p. 110. The polarity of wisdom and skillfulness is referred to in Iranian texts and is also mentioned in Chinese Manichaean documents. Cf. Sundermann, *Texte*, 61; Tsui Chi, "Mo Ni Chiao Hsia Pu Tsan. 'The Lower (Second ?) Section of the Manichaean Hymns'", *BSOAS* 11 (1943-46), p. 196, v. 231c; skillfulness and skillful means are also referred to repeatedly, e.g. Tsui Chi, *op.cit.*, p. 193, v. 206c; p. 195, v. 220c; s. further Chinese Manichaean Treatise 1282a23, 1283c13ff. For a new German translation of the *Treatise* s. H. Schmidt-Glintzer, *Die chinesischen Manichaica*. Wiesbaden 1986.

³⁰ Boyce, *Reader*, pp. 188f (text ds).

³¹ W. B. Henning, "Two Manichaean Magical Texts", *BSOAS* 12 (1947), p. 52.

³² Sundermann, *Texte*, pp. 40-41.

³³ Sundermann, *Texte*, p. 41.

³⁴ Quoted in W. Henning, "Sogdische Miszellen", *BSOAS* 8 (1935-37), p. 586; cf. W. Sundermann, *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer*. (Berliner Turfantexte IV). Berlin 1973, p. 99.

³⁵ Tsui Chi, *op.cit.*, p. 187, v. 129a and v. 127b.

³⁶ W. Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*. (*APAW* 1936, Phil.-hist. Kl. Nr. 10). Berlin 1937, p. 19.

³⁷ Henning, *op.cit.*, pp. 20-21.

³⁸ *Türk.Man.* II, 5.

³⁹ Sogdian *Xuāstvānīft*, line 13. Cf. W. B. Henning, *Sogdica*. (James G. Furlong Fund, Vol. XXI). London 1940, pp. 64-66.

⁴⁰ I. Gershevitch, *A Grammar of Manichaean Sogdian*. London 1961, p. 192, §1278. Dr. Sundermann kindly makes me aware of a similar wording in M 5563, p. 1, 1.5-7, where he reads: ... *xww xwp [xwr](mzt) 'βγ ww pnc qwṭr [   ] (x)[y]pδδ*

(pnc) [end of the fragment], "the good God Xormuzta ... the five *gotras*, [   ] his five [sons (?)]".

[41] A. Heinrichs-L. Koenen, "Der Kölner Mani-Kodex ... Edition der Seiten 72,8-99,9", *ZPE* 32 (1978), pp. 116f.

[42] Henning, *Bet- und Beichtbuch*, p. 41. Henning had translated: "In whose sign do I stand now?" Dr. Sundermann kindly points out to me that in Middle Persian and Parthian *pd nyš'n*, "in the sign", means "like, similar to". Hence *pr 'xšnyrk* is to be understood in a like manner, so that we arrive at the translation "Whom do I resemble now?" If this is the case, he suggests, the following words about the flesh and blood partaken of could have a cosmogonic connotation.

[43] Tsui Chi, *op.cit.*, p. 198, v. 252c-254a.

[44] *Türk.Man.* I, 24.

[45] *Türk.Man.* III, 15.

[46] *Türk.Man.* III, 23.

[47] W. Henning, "The Book of the Giants", *BSOAS* 11 (1943-46), pp. 72f.

[48] Cf. H.-J. Klimkeit, "Manichäische und buddhistische Beichtformeln aus Turfan. Beobachtungen zur Beziehung zwischen Gnosis und Mahāyāna", *ZRGG* 29 (1977), pp. 193-228.

[49] Cf. H.-J. Klimkeit, "Der Stifter im Lande der Seidenstraßen. Bemerkungen zur buddhistischen Laienfrömmigkeit", *ZRGG* 35 (1983), pp. 289-308.

[50] P. Zieme, "Zu den nestorianisch-türkischen Turfantexten", in: G. Hazai and P. Zieme (edd.), *Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur der altaischen Völker*. Berlin 1974, p. 663.

[51] W. Bang-A. von Gabain, "Der große Hymnus auf Mani", *Türkische Turfan-Texte* III. (*SPAW* 1930). Berlin 1930, pp. 183-211; new ed. and Engl. trans.: L. V. Clark, "The Manichaean Turkic *Pothi-Book*", *Altorientalische Forschungen* IX. Berlin 1982, pp. 145-218.

[52] Clark, *op.cit.*, p. 168.

[53] We quote verses according to the edition of Bang-von Gabain.

[54] H. J. Klimkeit, *Manichaean Art and Calligraphy*. (Iconography of Religions XX). Leiden 1982, scene 40 (plate XXII).

[55] J. P. Asmussen, "Der Manichäismus als Vermittler literarischen Gutes", *TEMENOS* 2 (1966), pp. 5-21.

[56] H.-J. Klimkeit, "Das Pferd Kaṇṭhaka—Symbol buddhistischer Erzähl- und Kunstelemente im zentralasiatischen Manichäismus", in: J. Ozols and V. Thewalt (edd.), *Aus dem Osten des Alexanderreiches*. Festschrift für Klaus Fischer. Köln 1984, pp. 91-97.

[57] P. Zieme, "Ein uigurisches Turfanfragment der Erzählung vom guten und vom bösen Prinzen", *AOH* 28 (1974), pp. 263-268.

[58] Asmussen, "Der Manichäismus als Vermittler literarischen Gutes", pp. 9-11. Cf. also P. Zieme, "Uigurische Pañcatantra-Fragmente", *Turcica* II (1970), pp. 32-70; P. Zieme, "Die türkischen Yosipas-Fragmente", *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* 14. Berlin 1968, pp. 45-58.

[59] Asmussen, "Der Manichäismus als Vermittler literarischen Gutes", p. 13.

[60] Sundermann, *Parabeltexte*, p. 98. As Dr. Sundermann points out to me, an important aim of the parables was also the exhortation to give alms.

[61] The term is specifically used for Mani's *Gospel* in the "Great Hymn to Mani", v. 34.

ABBREVIATIONS

AOH	*Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*
APAW	*Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*
BSOAS	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
Mir.Man. III	*Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan* III. Von F. C. ANDREAS. Aus dem Nachlaß herausgegeben von Dr. W. HENNING. (*SPAW* 1934, Phil.-hist. Kl.) Berlin 1934, pp. 848-912.
MP.	Middle Persian
Pth.	Parthian
Skr.	Sanskrit
Sogd.	Sogdian
SPAW	*Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*
Türk.Man. I-III	A. von LE COQ, *Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho* I-III. (*APAW* 1911, Nr. 6; *APAW* 1919, Nr. 3; *APAW* 1922, Nr. 2). Berlin 1911, 1919, 1922.
Uig.	Uighur
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*
ZRGG	*Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*

BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK SURVEY

Methodology and more methodology

> 1. (3.1) *The Definition*. Within the context of these considerations, let me now proceed to suggest a definition of Religion and to offer as well two corollary definitions that grow out of the basic definition. I suggest the following: *Religion* is a "complete system of human communication" (or a "form of life") showing in primarily "commissive", "behabitative" and "exercitive" modes how a community comports itself when it encounters an "untranscendable negation of .... possibilities".
> The two related corollary definitions are.....

> 2. Applied Theology 142 ....
> This is a macro/micro humanistic approach to the sociology of religion and teaching containing four components: (1) Examination of historical paradigms; (2) Field studies of radical sociological change in religious states; (3) Analysis of social-cultural continuities and discontinuities, derived and underived religious posturing, dimensions of tension, crisis confluence and synthesis in cross-cultural states; (4) A correlation of sociology and teaching enabling the student to distill transcendent processes as well as to develop a more cogent language of religion in the context of educational goals.

The first quote comes from a work purporting to be a major contribution to the "Theory of Religion". I have spared the reader the two corollaries following from the definition. The second quote is taken from the Religious Studies course catalogue of a very prestigious university in the U.S.; it is so outrageously funny that the *New Yorker* reprinted it with the remark "those who pass go straight to heaven". Charity prevents me from identifying the two sources.

The almost unbearable verbiage and pretentious bombast characteristic of the floodtide of methodological literature that is sweeping over us (incidentally, I still have to discover an author whose writings betray an awareness of a possible difference between "method" and "methodology") have the unfortunate effect of turning many serious scholars off a subject that should not be completely neglected. A former President of the I.A.H.R. and author of a "Phenomenology of Religion", Prof. Geo Widengren, vented his annoyance and irritation with considerable animus (not to say ill-temper) in an article published in the special Pettazoni Centenary issue of *Studi i Materiali*, 1983. According to Widengren the obsession with methodology is a symptom of the decline

of scholarship. After all, it is so much easier to pontificate about methodology than to make substantive and substantial contributions to the history of religions. Much of the literary output flooding the bookmarket seems to justify Widengren's irritation, though it is surely right and proper that historians of religion ask themselves, from time to time, what exactly it is that they are actually doing (or that their predecessors have been doing). Thus the "Religion and Reason" series published by Mouton and devoted to questions of "method and theory" is approaching its 40th volume without our having become much wiser. Some volumes in the series are, nevertheless, interesting enough to merit separate reviews (see below).

Perhaps the best and most solid piece of scholarship on the reviewer's desk is Dr Flasche's study of Joachim Wach.[1] It is remarkable indeed that this is the only serious major study of Wach, especially as the contrast with Wach's successor on the History of Religions Chair at Chicago, the late Mircea Eliade, is simply staggering. Wach's *Religionswissenschaft* was discussed, if at all, in reviews, obituaries, occasional commemoration addresses and the like. Already in Eliade's lifetime dissertations, books, articles, special issues of journals etc. on his system, method, hermeneutics or what-have-you were published by the dozen. One of the explanations may be that the influence of Eliade, that great introvert, radiated by way of his massive literary *œuvre*; Wach's influence was due to his personal charisma as a teacher. This hypothesis receives weighty confirmation from Flasche who shows that Wach remained stamped throughout his life by his experiences as a German youth in the circle around Stefan George—a circle in which the master-disciple relationship (with George as the master and High Priest) was at a premium. Flasche proceeds from a biographical summary of the man and his work (carefully distinguishing between the German and the American periods) to an analysis of Wach's philosophical, theological and *religionswissenschaftliche* writings. There is unity as well as a "break" in his work for which Flasche offers two complementary answers: one on the biographical level, the other in terms of the fusion of the aforementioned three approaches in his theory of *Verstehen*. Wach's main effort was directed at establishing *Religionswissenschaft* as a legitimate and autonomous branch of study and to delimit it from related fields. This led to Wach's notion of *systematische Religionswissenschaft* which is thoroughly analysed and discussed here for the first time. But is this *Religionswissenschaft* really all that autonomous, or is it a river that ultimately flows again into the great sea of "theology of religions"? Flasche's discussion of this question quite naturally leads him to his final considerations regarding the possibilities of continuing

along the road paved by Wach. It would be difficult to find in Flasche's study, highly technical as it is, a sentence even remotely reminiscent of the quotes placed at the head of this section.

A book which, in spite of its underlying unity, is so varied and rich in its contents that no justice can be done to it in a short survey, is C. Colpe's attempt to "demonstrate" the essential difference between Theology, Ideology, and *Religionswissenschaft*.[2] The author carefully delimits the study of religion from its two closest neighbours, theology on the one hand and the Humanities on the other. He does not hide his Christian commitment and problems (also as regards preaching and teaching), but what he has to say on the nature and *Problematik* of the study of religions will undoubtedly be considered an important contribution also by non-theological students of religion.

In vol. XXVI (1979) NUMEN published a review article by Donald Wiebe, occasioned by W. C. Smith's *Belief and History*, as well as Smith's reply (NUMEN XXVII, 1980). Since then both authors have taken up again their arguments and enlarged on them. Wiebe's title[3] inevitably brings to mind W. C. Smith's *Questions of Religious Truth* (1967). It is also subtitled "Toward an Alternative Paradigm for the Study of Religion", which surely means that the current paradigms are inadequate. The present reviewer, like Molière's hero, never knew that he had a paradigm; but whatever it is that he had, it is—so he learned (Wiebe pp. 231 and 244, approvingly quoting W. Oxtoby)—"sterile isolationism and externalism". Wiebe's basic problem is the conviction that by shelving the truth question (with or without phenomenological *epoché*) the "science of religion" remains bogged down in mere descriptivism and cannot but reveal itself in its self-contradictory nature. Many students of religion will undoubtedly demur, even if they have less aptitude than Wiebe for legerdemain with the word "Truth". The author is certainly right in pointing out the peculiar historico-political circumstances that determined the character of the nascent *Religionswissenschaft*, but whilst his detailed description is undoubtedly valuable, the principle as such is old and hoary: after all, we were all brought up already at nursery-school on a diet of "sociology of knowledge". And needless to say, every student of religion spends most of his time studying not only the "truths" experienced, lived, recognised, taught, expounded etc. by every religion but also the kind of truth they have in mind when they use terms like truth or its equivalents. The author has much to say that stimulates reflection, but the "alternative paradigm" seems not only far away but also unnecessary.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith's *Faith and Belief*[4] is a companion volume to his earlier *Belief and History*. In fact, the two are one book arguing the same

thesis. The thesis is very old; in fact it also has a respectable Christian history reflected in distinctions such as between *notitia* and *fiducia*, *fides qua creditur* and *fides quae creditur*. What is new is the thoroughness and *aplomb* with which Smith presents it. Let no one say that Smith is merely importing Protestant Pietism into the Study of Religions (though, in fact, he is doing that too). There is tremendous scholarship in this book, as witnessed by the 175 pp. of notes in a book of altogether 347 pp.! The involuted style probably reflects the author's conviction that only an involuted style can do justice to the extreme complexity of the argument. But let me summarise the complexities as superficially as I can: all real religion is an existential stance or *habitus*; a total, all-englobing manner of involved human life; a manner of being. This is faith. Religion as faith is not only a philosophical but also an historical fact. In course of time this total faith attitude became more differentiated and developed in different directions of belief and beliefs. In other words: let us praise god or the gods for having given us the English language by means of which we can desynonymise the nouns 'faith' and 'belief' in order to make a religious point. The distinction is between the genuine, authentic, personal, total, existential etc. attitude of 'faith' (or perhaps 'faith in') *versus* the more externalised 'I believe that....'. Faith in God is not the same as believing that a god exists.

Strangely enough this is exactly the point which Martin Buber made several decades ago when he published his *Zwei Glaubensweisen*: "there are two types of faith, and two only", the one being Jewish (including the Synoptic Jesus) and the other being that of Paul. Buber called the one by the biblical Hebrew word *'emunah*, the other by the Greek *pistis* (the term used by the Greek-writing Paul). Smith mentions Buber's *I and Thou* on one or two occasions, but oddly enough *Two Types of Faith*, the work in which precisely the same distinction is made, is nowhere mentioned. Of course there is the not inconsiderable difference that Buber limits his analysis to Judaism and Christianity. By some kind of inevitable degenerative process or original curse, all *'emunah* (W. C. Smith's 'faith') hardens (Buber would say "decays and coagulates") into credal statements. Smith casts his net much wider, since he wants to include all "religion" (before they become—or degenerate into?—religions) in his scheme. Buber's concentration on the Bible is not as narrow-minded as the comparison might suggest, because he distinguishes between "ways of faith" and "ways of wisdom" (Buddha, Lao-Tse) whereas Smith subsumes everything that seems ultimately and religiously meaningful under 'faith'. The Japanese scholar T. Izutsu (*The Concept of Belief in Islamic Theology: a semantic analysis of 'iman' and 'islam'*, 1956), who was close to

W. C. Smith at the time, still blithely wrote "the present work is an analytic study of the concept of 'belief' *or* 'faith' in Islamic theology". Belief or faith: for Izutsu, at that time at least, the two terms were synonymous.

There is a great deal of food for thought here as well as fuel for polemics. Many of the arguments advanced against Buber at the time are applicable also in this case. Superficial minds (like the present reviewer's) whom no amount of high-flowing (Buber) or involuted (Smith) style can make grasp the existential profundities (*Seinsweise*, spiritual orientation of the self etc.) of greater and better scholars, will remain stuck with the kind of 'superficial' questions asked by linguistic philosophers: cannot every utterance concerning "faith" or "belief in" be ultimately reduced to a propositional statement of the type "I believe that...."? The problem was discussed, albeit in a different philosophical key, almost four decades ago by Karl Jaspers (*Der philosophische Glaube*, 1948) who argued that *fides qua* and *fides quae* were not a disjunction but two sides of the same coin: "Daher ist zwar Glaube immer Glaube an Etwas .... Der Glaube ist eins in dem was wir trennen als Subjekt und Objekt, als Glaube, aus dem, und als Glaube, an den wir glauben".

J. van Baal has contributed a great deal to anthropological and religious studies in his long and distinguished career as a specialist in Indonesian studies, Dutch civil servant (he was the last Dutch governor of New Guinea), original anthropological researcher (especially his work on the Papuan Marind-anim), Japanese prisoner of war, and for almost twenty years professor of anthropology at the University of Utrecht. Among his major attempts to formulate a theoretical synthesis of his reflections on the anthropological study of religion, we should count his *Symbols of Communication* (1971). His later book,[5] whilst in many ways stimulating, unfortunately reads more like a sermon. The book ends with the assertion that *la condition humaine* is meant for freedom: the freedom to be good. You find freedom in partnership, and partnership in religion. Secularisation comes into the picture when the author notes that modern civilisation allows man to choose for the first time (?) to live without religion—and he is probably the poorer for it. The anthropological material on which the argument rests is very partial and inadequate (hardly any African or American material). But a scholar who has contributed so much as Jan van Baal is surely also entitled to preach a valedictory sermon.

Gnostics, heretics, and saints.

Heretics are staple diet for inquisitors as well as historians. The Christian West alone has produced more than any single scholar can deal with.

There are also the dubious and marginal cases, depending on who decides—or has the power to decide—who is a central or marginal heretic and who is not. The spectrum may include any type of reforming movement, Bogomils and Cathars, Waldensians and the Poverty Movement, Beguines, Joachites, Franciscan deviants, Brethren of the Free Spirit, Wycliff, Lollards, Hussites and—of course—witches. More heresies can be uncovered by a diligent perusal of Inquisition documents. It is not surprising, therefore, that scholarly output is snowballing to an extent that is impossible to keep track of. The Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto deserves a vote of thanks for its bibliography on the subject,[6] enhanced by an author index, subject index and ms. index.

A very ambitious undertaking is the album-like volume (format 24,5 × 27,5 cm.) by M. Erbstösser on medieval heretics.[7] There always attaches a special interest to studies by East German scholars published by prestigious West German firms. The present volume is enhanced by 130 illustrations, of which 20 in colour. Although the reader knows in advance how the subject is going to be treated and what the conclusions will be, the volume is not without merit and the array of sound scholarship impressive. The author starts off which the dualistic heresies at the margins of the Byzantine Empire (Paulicians and Bogomils: peasant resistance against urban civilisation and opposition against the feudal Byzantine High Church). Most heretical movements are essentially movements of social protest (what else could they be? One wonders whether Grundmann's polemics, decades ago, against e.g. E. Werner's *Pauperes Christi* was all in vain)—sometimes linking up with eschatological prophecies or even self-deification (e.g., the Brethren of the Free Spirit). The papal counteroffensive is well described. The Hussites are left out of this account since they are no longer "heretics" *stricto sensu* but—hold your breath!— early bourgeois revolutionaries. The work is abreast of the latest results of international scholarship. The greatest sin of the heretics, from the point of view of an East Block scholar, was their escape from political struggle to the make-believe world of religion. But even those who hold different views on the nature of heresies will read this book with profit, pleasure and respect.

NUMEN (XVIII, 1981, pp. 83-4) combined its joy at the appearance of the collected essays of H-Ch. Puech on Gnosticism with the eager expectation of the publication of the great master's scattered articles on Manichaeism. The volume[8] has now been out for some time. It contains seven Manichaean chapters (among them wellknown classics), plus one major and two minor essays on other subjects.

Students of Manichaeism tend to focus on their special cultural areas and periods: the "near eastern" and mediterranean parts of the late

Roman Empire; Mesopotamia; Central Asia and—via Central Asia and
the Silk Road (Turfan, Tun-Huang etc.)—China. The researcher's
linguistic equipment (Greek, Latin, Coptic, Aramaean, Parthian, Sog-
dian, Arabic, Tokharian, Uighur, Tibetan, Chinese and what-have-you)
is a function of his focus—and/or vice versa. Hardly anyone can master
all the relevant sources, and nobody has ever given us the whole picture
of this amazing, most successful and also most persecuted, as well as most
widespread of gnostic religions. Dr. Lieu's publication[9] therefore fills a
real need even if it does not contribute any new, let alone revolutionary
research findings. But for the first time specialists and non-specialists alike
have the whole panorama spread out before them: Mani and his Jewish
and Christian (incl. Judaeo-Christian, Elchasaite and gnostic), Mesopota-
mian and Parthian background; the beginnings of the Manichaean
church; its relation to the state, whether Persia or eastern/western Rome;
the nature of its appeal (St. Augustine acting as main witness) and its con-
demnation (heresy, sorcery etc.); its spread eastward "from Mesopotamia
to Chang-an", from Transoxania to T'ang China along the Silk Road.
The Central Asian and Chinese chapters of Manichaean history began to
be written around the turn of this century only, after Aurel Stein, Pelliot
and others made and published their discoveries. Of very special interest
are the eastern transformations of Manichaeism and the syncretisms they
produced, perhaps best symbolised by the "Buddha-Christ of Light".
Perhaps we shall never know how much exactly Amida, the Buddha of In-
finite Light, owes to Manichaeism. The author gives us a condensed but
excellent account of the "Taocisation" of Manichaeism, and of the ups
and downs of the religion under the Five Dynasties, the Sung, the Mongols
and the Ming. Today we all take Turfan, Tun-huang and Chinese
Manichaeism for granted, and have difficulty in imagining what a revolu-
tion these discoveries represented at the time. It took Chavannes several
years to accept and digest the facts. Thus in 1897 he still believed that the
Mo-ni of certain Chinese texts referred to Muslims. In 1911 he would
edit, together with Pelliot, in the *Journal Asiatique*, "Un traité manichéen
retrouvé en Chine." How many students of Manichaeism are aware of
the fact that a Manichaean treatise got lodged in a Sung period Taoist
canon, or that the only still extant Manichaean temple building is to be
found in southern China? But also in China the religion of light (*ming-
chiao*) ended with the dynasty of light (*ming-chao*). On one question which
used to be hotly disputed the author holds very definite views:
Manichaean origins owe nothing to Iranian influence. Here, in spite of
the evidence (especially Coptic) that can be adduced, the last word has
probably not yet been spoken. The bibliography is as complete as is
humanly possible.

And from here to neo-Manichaeism. One of the most valuable medieval Cathar texts is the well-known apocryphon based on Bogomil sources and known as the *Interrogatio Iohannis*. Valuable because it is one of the few authentic documents (like the *Liber de duobus principibus* and a few others), because it deals with "secrets" viz. myths and beliefs not expounded elsewhere, and because it confirms the link between Cathars and Bogomils. Dr Edina Bozóky[10] has given us the first critical edition of the text, complete with translation, a detailed commentary, and copious notes in which all aspects of the *Interrogatio* are fully discussed. The critical ed. is of the extant Latin text, the original(s)—Greek? Slav?—being lost. The editor and her text raise questions that go beyond the self-imposed limitations of her solid and careful study. For the problem of the "gnostic temptation" takes us beyond Cathars and Bogomils to uncharted seas of the human soul.

Of all ancient "gnostic" (and baptist) sects the sole survivors (if a fossil can be called a "survivor") are the Mandaeans. They are still of sufficient interest to make regular appearances in scholarly journals, including NUMEN. The Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft in Darmstadt, continuing its policy of collecting scholarly *disjecta membra* on specific subjects in handy volumes, has devoted vol. 167 of its series *Wege der Forschung* to the Mandaeans.[11] Some of the problems connected with this *kind* of publications have been raised by Prof. Bowersock in NUMEN XXVIII, 1981, 88-93. In the present volume we have all the classics (or extracts from them), from Brandt and Bousset and Lidzbarski to Reitzenstein and Schaeder to Bultmann, Widengren, Save-Soderbergh and, of course, Kurt Rudolph. Non-German texts (e.g. Lady Drower, H-Ch. Puech) are given in German translation. There is always something to complain about, and no doubt Prof. Widengren's views have influenced the selection. Still, it is a handy and useful volume to possess.

Those on the side of the angels, or rather of the medieval Catholic Church, could always still their hunger for saints, miracles and piety by resorting to that most engaging of all "historical" narratives, the *Lombardia Historia* or, as it is better known under its other name, the "Golden Legend" by Jacques of Voraigne, composed around 1260. The work very quickly became so popular that we have over 1000 mss., not to speak of the many translations—enough to frighten away anyone rash enough to dream of a critical edition. But there is enough to keep us busy even without a critical edition, not least the basic problem of this kind of legendary narrative. Addressed to an illiterate public (by means of verbal communication), it is nevertheless a literary work i.e., a product of scholarly, clerical, ecclesiastical culture. The author was an illustrious and promi-

nent figure in the Dominican order, a *confrater* of Thomas Aquinas whose attitude to miracles was rather reserved. What are we to make of this work by a high-placed Dominican ecclesiastic, structured around the annual liturgical calendar (*per circulum anni*), and at the same time clearly absorbing popular legend and piety, folklore, and appeal to the devotion of simple folk? What is its relation to earlier and later collections, and wherein resides the secret of its success? What is the place of hagiographic legend among related *genres littéraires* (*Sage, Märchen* etc.)? In fact, as Prof. LeGoff so well puts it in his Foreword, the Golden Legend occupies a "strategic position" in this field, and A. Boureau,[12] by focussing on his theme, which is the "narrative system" of the writer, and by refusing to be led astray by other, equally interesting, important and alluring problems, has given us an excellent piece of scholarship. The analysis is both historical and structural, and it succeeds convincingly in revealing a "grammar of Christian salvation" underlying a type of storytelling that expresses (LeGoff) "the network of obsessions of a whole society, of an age."

Buddhist Worlds

There is a *genre littéraire* that enjoys growing popularity: large, album-like publications, different from good albums not in the quality of the pictures but in the different ratio of text and pictures. The publications in question want to be "books", not albums—lavishly illustrated books, no doubt, in which the text predominates. The chapters are shared out among acknowledged authorities in their specialised fields. The unity of the volume and the overall quality of its *haute vulgarisation* are the responsibility of the General Editor. Thames & Hudson (London) have already earned much acclaim with their *World of Islam*, and similar volumes. The volume dealing with Buddhism[13] can boast not only of the two best possible editors, 82 colour prints, 215 photographs plus drawings and maps, but of eleven excellent and most readable chapters written by the best authorities and taking us from the beginnings, through the Indian developments, to the North (Central Asia, Nepal, Tibet), to South-East Asia (Ceylon, Burma, Thailand etc.), to China and East Asia. It is a book to study, to cherish in one's library, to enjoy, and to go back to for information. The German ed.[14] is practically identical to the English original and equally well produced.

Even more lavishly produced is the Japanese volume *Butsuda no Sekai*[15] with texts by H. Nakamura, Y. Nara and R. Satoh and photographs by I. Maroyama. Hefty as the volume is, it confines itself to the Buddha's Indian world only, and more volumes are to follow dealing, in geographical divisions, with the other Buddhist worlds.

What language the Buddha spoke, or preached in is neither here nor there. The point is that in order to enter into the classical Buddhist world one has to learn Pali. We must be grateful to the Pali Text Society for producing a paperback ed., based on the second ed. of 1974, of Warder's *Introduction*.[16] Twenty years since the appearance of the first ed., the book has lost none of its usefulness, especially for beginners, since also the early exercises are taken from the Canon.

''Buddhist Worlds'' can also mean the cosmologies current in Buddhist societies, and one of the classics of this genre is the Thai *chef d'œuvre, The Sermon on the Three Worlds* composed by a 14th cent. Thai prince.[17] Here we can learn what the 31 realms of the 3 worlds are really like and, more importantly, what it is like to be reborn in any of these. Beyond that there is the wider question what cognitive and imaginative pressures and mechanisms produce cosmologies and what e.g., is the relative contribution of scholastic and of visionary elements to the shaping of these mythologies. Students of Theravada Buddhism without any knowledge of Thai language should be more than grateful to the Reynolds, and the gratitude of their readers should compensate them for the offense their translation will undoubtedly have given to certain Buddhist modernists bent on projecting their own favourite version of ''true Buddhism.''

There are ever so many oversimplifying and generally useless ways of dividing religions into two main groups: monotheistic and polytheistic, history-oriented and nature-oriented, iconic and aniconic etc. (My favourite distinction, certainly of major importance to publishers of albums, is between photogenic and non-photogenic religions). One of the most interesting is that between religions which develop major philosophical traditions (whether as infrastructure or superstructure) and those which do not feel subject to that particular constraint. Buddhism can undoubtedly compete with any other religion in its philosophical, even scholastic, productivity. The result are two types of studies: those dealing with Buddhist philosophy on its own terms, and those which want to compare Buddhist with other (mainly Western) philosophies.

Dinnaga and Dharmakirti have usually been described (though sometimes with mild reservations, as by Stcherbatsky) as Yogacara-type idealists. Things are complicated by the fact that even if Dinnaga was a disciple of Vasubandhu, we know that there were (at least) two Vasubandhus. Amar Singh[18] understandably has little patience with Mahayana scholarship (also in Japan) that claims that Vasubandhu ultimately converted to the Vijnanavada school. Singh makes out a very good case for the Sautrantika character, pure and undefiled—in fact, on the *paramartha* level—of the trio. Singh's may not be the last word on the subject, but he has certainly advanced the discussion like few others.

Everyman's Library has published an anthology designed to bring out the Buddha's "Philosophy of Man."[19] The anthology is meant for the interested layman, and the introduction by the editor and compiler (pp. ix-xxvi) reflects the moderate/critical consensus of current scholarship. Whilst the title prudently speaks of "Early Indian Buddhist Dialogues," Prof. Ling's introduction speaks of "The Buddha in His Own Words"—but leaving no doubt that this figure of speech is not historical-critical but rather mystico-metaphysical, referring to the eternal Buddha-word.

Everybody agrees that Buddhism aspires to bring its devotees to perfection—whatever it be. The traditional division into Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana has also resulted in three main textbook images of perfection: the arahant, the bodhisattva and the mahasiddha. Prof. Nathan Katz[20] feels that these distinctions can be overdone. In fact, seeing Buddhism as a whole is more important than exaggerated scholarly analysis of, and emphasis on, differences. The author brings to his task an impressive array of both literary-textual analysis and "field work" (which in this case means personal involvement with the traditions concerned), as well as hermeneutical considerations touching on some of the basic questions of Buddhist "philosophy of language." He thus sees bridges and continuities where others find disjunctions. We should, nevertheless, remind ourselves that those who see the disjunctions are not only the supercritical western scholars (whom Prof. Katz seems to have in mind) but even more the Buddhist sectarian and denominational traditions.

Prof. N. Katz has also edited a volume with a more comparative thrust.[21] The book has the blessing of the Dalai Lama, a preface by the Editor, and a Foreword by Joe Blofield (who is always worth reading, even when you disagree). Twenty contributions (about a third of which are essays published earlier elsewhere, and not all deserving a reprint) written by Buddhologists, philosophers, spokesmen of the Kyoto School (e.g. Nishitani on "Nihilism and Sunyata"), and dialogicians. The two essays on Nietzsche just have the bad luck of inviting comparison with Mistry's study (see NUMEN XXIII (1985) p. 274f). Readers can have a good time with Zen and the "Initial nature" of man, Heidegger and Zen (a big favourite these days), Buddhism and Marxism, Nagarjuna-Frege-Aristotle-Wittgenstein and so on. Let it be said in praise of the volume that at least some of the contributions are very good.

In Katz's volume Dr Steven Heine deals with Buddhism and Nietzsche, and leaves Zen and Heidegger to others. *En revanche* he devotes a whole book to the latter subject.[22] Dogen studies, with or without Heidegger, are undergoing a renaissance, even a boom, due in great part to the fact that

they are gradually being freed (like other Zen studies) from monopolistic sectarian stranglehold. Time and temporality, finitude and impermanence are basic Buddhist (and Zen) themes. The recovery of their ontological significance, impossible until now because of deficient philosophical presuppositions, was the main concern of Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*. It is this early Heidegger who is Dogen's counterpart for the purposes of Heine's study. The *uji* chapter of Dogen's *Shobogenzo* is given in translation as a useful appendix. The author rightly dispensed with printing also the original text of which there exist several modern scholarly (Japanese) editions.

Another Dogen book is by T. J. Kodera[23] who also wishes to contribute to the de-monopolisation of sectarian (i.e., Soto) Dogen studies. Lest we misjudge these authors as obsessive neurotics let us remember that the Soto establishment succeeded in preventing the publication of the Shobogenzo for half a millenium! There is a very detailed and useful treatment of Dogen's early career, and an equally useful—though at times too free and not always reliable—text edition and translation of the Hokyo-ki. Unfortunately the author does not deal with any of the really important questions posed by the title of his book and by the text edited: the precise dating of Dogen's writings (i.e., the question of the development of his thought; the nature of Dogen's relationship to Ju-ching (i.e., the dating of this particular text and the existence of other texts) viz. the vexed and partly sectarian problem of Dogen's "originality" *versus* his indebtedness to his Chinese masters, and a host of other critical questions. Much recent research is not mentioned. Altogether a typical Ph. D. thesis which the author should have allowed to "mature in cask" before publishing it.

Passing from Dogen to Zen in general, one of the great dates in the history of Zen studies is 1959, the year of the appearance of H. Dumoulin's *Zen: Geschichte und Gestalt* (332 pp. octavo). An English translation (335 pp.) appeared in 1963 under the title *A History of Zen Buddhism*. The book immediately, and with good reason, established itself as a classic, even among oversensitive readers who thought they detected an occasional Roman Catholic bias, especially when it came to matters like the definition and nature of "mysticism", and although it had no footnotes, Chinese characters and other scholarly apparatus. But since 1959 research has moved on at an amazing rate. Many texts have been edited viz. re-edited, many have appeared in excellent western languages translations and with excellent commentaries, specialised Buddhist dictionaries have appeared (suffice it to mention here the *Zengaku Daijiten*) and an enormous amount of solid and also innovative research, mainly

by Japanese scholars, has been published. The original Swiss publisher now brought out a second, enlarged, revised and updated—in fact, a thoroughly re-written—edition, complete with notes, tables, indices etc.[24] Vol. i corresponds to the first eight chapters of the original work plus a new 9th chapter. The epilogue, with its perspective on the earnest Japanese dharmaseekers travelling to Sung-China (*guho nyuso*) serves as a bridge to vol. ii which has just appeared. But research on Zen is proceeding at such an amazing rate that even this most recent work is already out-of-date on some points. The history of "Northern" *versus* "Southern" Zen may have to be completely rewritten before long. The author's fulsome praise of Dogen, whilst gratifying, raises many questions since the matter of Dogen's originality (and what exactly it consisted of) is a moot question pending more research. For the time being too much is still being taken for granted. Let us all hope that the octogenarian *doyen* of Zen studies will see through press the English translation of his impressive *magnum opus* and that this English ed. will not be marred (as the German original) by misprints.

A reading of Prof. Dumoulin's book inevitably reminds the reader of one of the most painful lacunas in Zen studies. Korea seems to fall between two stools. At best it is mentioned as a bridge between China and Japan, a truth which is at best a halftruth. Most accounts deal with China up to the Sung period and then—here we go—comes the great leap from Sung China to Kamakura Japan. All the more reason to be grateful to Prof. Buswell.[25] The Introduction (95 pp.) surveys Korean Buddhism from its beginnings to the Silla period and the emergence of Korean *Son*. The life and thought of Chinul (Koryo period, and probably one of the most important figures in the history of Korean Buddhism) are discussed in chapters 2 and 3, to be followed by a translation (with notes) of Chinul's writings. The book has rightly been included in the "UNESCO Collection of Representative Works." Not only Dogen but also other sources of Japanese Buddhism are being translated in growing numbers. Shinran is one of the translatees, and a new translation of the Kyogoshinsho has appeared as the sixth volume in the Shin Buddhism Translation Series.[26] Although the Kyogoshinsho has been translated before (by D. T. Suzuki, under Otani auspices), the new version and especially the Introduction (pp. 21-54) should be found helpful by many students.

Still on the subject of translations, mention should be made of the flood of renderings of Tibetan texts that inundates us these days. Gone are the days when Tibetologists translated texts for the chosen few among their non-Tibetological fellow scholars. The paperback age is upon us with regard to Lamaism and Tantrism no less than Zen. *Compassion in Tibetan*

Buddhism[27] contains two texts: one a modern work (Kensur Lekden, *Meditations of a Tantric Abbot*), the other a Gelugpa classic, Tsongkapa's "Way of Compassion"—the title given here to the first five chapters of Tsongkapa's commentary on Chandrakirti's *Madhyamikavatara*. The scholarly translator and editor does not conceal his personal commitment to the doctrines and the masters he presents. Altogether it appears that Tibetan Buddhism is breaking the monopoly of Zen as the accredited representative to the West of "Eastern Spirituality." Even the names of the publishing houses loudly proclaim this tendency: Shambala, Snow Lion, Wisdom Publications etc.

Wisdom Publications in London publish three series: Basic Books (Orange Series), Intermediate Books (White Series), Advanced Books (Blue Series). We shall not enlarge here on the colour symbolism involved, and merely note that no Basic Books have reached us: surely a compliment to NUMEN and its readers. Dr Jeffrey Hopkins and his collaborators have been close to the Dalai Lama since his exile from Tibet, have travelled with him and translated for him. They are thus, in a way, the master's voice. In the (white) intermediate series Donals S. Lopez Jr. with J. Hopkins present the Dalai Lama's account of the history of Tibetan Buddhism, religious practices, mantras, tantra and Buddhahood.[28] The book is a translation from an original Tibetan publication (1963) augmented by two later addresses (1979 and 1981) by the Dalai Lama. From the white we progress to the blue series and to the initiations that transform us into Buddhas. The Dalai Lama administered the first western initiation into Kalachakra practice in Madison, U.S.A., in 1981. The rite is fully described and explained by the Dalai Lama, and the texts used are translated and supplied with commentaries. The whole is preceded by a long and fairly comprehensive introduction from the pen of the Editor.[29] Another book[30] in the advanced series reverts to a theme already mentioned earlier in this section: Buddhist compassion. The text is an exposition and translation of parts of an early 16th century Tibetan Madhyamika commentary on Tsongkapa's commentary on Chandrakirti's commentary on Nagarjuna. It cannot be repeated often enough that the close observation of publications (what authors, what kind of translations and commentaries, what kind of publishing houses, what kind of buyers and reading public) is among the duties of the historian of religion, for here he can put his finger on the pulse of the *Zeitgeist* and of contemporary religious tendencies.

Prof. Susumi Yamaguchi (1895-1976) was a leading Japanese Buddhist scholar, and also President of Otani University. (The latter detail has been added in order to acquaint the reader with Yamaguchi's denomina-

tional affiliation). His English book on Mahayana[31] is an extract from the author's much larger Japanese work. Greatly affected (in a negative way) by the way Japanese intellectuals were affected (in a positive way i.e. infatuated) by western modes of thought, the learned author meant to use the apparatus of western logic for Buddhist studies with the ultimate purpose of rejecting it as a useful tool for comprehending the ultimate Mahayana truths. The Buddha's compassionate decision to preach instead of vanishing in nibbana is the beginning of the Mahayana doctrine of Bodhisattva. There is a straight line from the Buddha via Nagarjuna to Madhyamika emptiness, Vijnanavada mind-only, Pure Land devotion and even Tantrism: they are all branches and developments of the "theology of enlightenment" of good Mahayana theology. The manner in which Buddhist scholars view and present their faith is surely something which historians of religion should not ignore.

That Buddhist metaphysics too cannot be properly understood without taking into account its fundamental "moral" and "ethical" concerns has been so well grasped that many writers preferred to call Buddhism an ethical system (or a lofty philosophy) rather than a religion. All this is true enough, provided we view the primacy of the moral as part of a "soteriological strategy" (to borrow a term, coined in another context, by Stephen Collins). Prof. Misra[32] takes the description of Buddhism as *silaparaka dharma* very literally and tries to analyse the development of Buddhist ethics under the double aspect of Buddhism's inner dynamics and outer historical circumstances and pressures. The study confines itself to Indian Buddhism, but does pay ample attention to the "distinctive growth of Buddhist spiritual experience" including the social dimensions and perspectives of Mahayana. Whether Ashoka's Buddhist kingship really was of the *chakravartin*-type as claimed by the author (ch. 4) or should be categorised differently is one of the many points where readers might want to disagree with the learned author.

In fact, the historian is dealing with two different Ashokas: that of the Rock and other Edicts as his main source, and that of Buddhist legend. Perhaps the latter is more important for an understanding how the Ashoka-image functioned in Buddhist consciousness, tradition, and socio-political ethos. To this end a study of the *Ashokavadana* is indispensable. Prof. John Strong[33] has well deserved of all students interested in Ashoka by publishing a translation, preceded by a thorough discussion (165 pp.) of the background of the legend, as well as of all the historical, literary and sociological (kingship, sangha, polis) problems involved. Well produced, in keeping with Princeton University Press standards, the book is a joy to handle and to read. The translation may raise occasional ques-

tions for, or even provoke severe criticism by, Sanskritist readers, but the introduction is instructive, intelligent and extremely valuable.

The name of Bunyo Nanjo (1848-1927) is a household word for every student of East Asian Buddhism, although his once pioneering Catalogue of the Chinese Tripitika (1883; Japanese revised reprint 1929) is now completely outdated thanks to the Taisho ed., the accessibility of which is now greatly enhanced by the Hobogirin *Répertoire* (1978)—an indispensable *vademecum* for users of T. In 1886 Nanjo published (or rather edited, since he had several collaborators) an English translation of his short history of Japanese Buddhist Sects, now available again in a photographic reprint.[34] How many Buddhist sects a scholar finds in Japan or cares to list is a matter of individual preferences rather than scientific principles, and certainly Nanjo was entitled to his own selection of "the Twelve" sects. Steinilber-Oberlin had a different count, and since the turn of the century so much work has been done on Japanese Buddhist sects that one wonders why this reprint was found necessary. The answer seems to be that the reading public in general, and in particular scholars wishing to build up their private libraries, desire not only up-to-date scholarship but also venerable classics that have been long out of print. The Nanjo *Short History* is such a classic.

A huge quantum leap in the treatment of the history of Buddhist sects is demonstrated by the Munich sinologist H. Schmidt-Glintzer.[35] Buddhist historiography is a problem in itself. (H. Bechert has advanced some very thoughtful and stimulating ideas, especially concerning the combination of national identity and the experience of this identity as connected to a religious vocation—cf. Israel and its Old Testament historiography with Ceylon and the Mahavamsa). Chinese historiography is another problem—*re* substance as well as *re* method. The writing of the history (including an analysis of the sense of history as well as of the historical circumstances conducive to it) of Buddhist schools in China compounds these problems. The author limits himself to the Sung period (north and south), but even so the problems remain complex enough. (The question of the succession of patriarchs is only one item and symptom in this vast subject). When and how did the sense of separate identities develop among T'ien T'ai and Ch'an Buddhists, and when and how did it crystallise in historiography? Historians belonging to these different schools also use different styles (*chi-chuan* versus *pian-nien*). And how does a sectarian history become a Chinese history, and the latter a "universal history"? When so much preliminary spade-work still remains to be done, many of the considerations advanced by the author are, for the time being, hypotheses only. But fruitful hypotheses they certainly are, and one day they may become recognised as facts.

The most intractable of all Buddhist worlds is undoubtedly that of the "historical Buddha" himself. There is no need to recapitulate here the obvious comparisons made between the quest of the historical Jesus and that of the historical Buddha. Hence books on "the Buddha" (e.g. the book with this title by Trevor Ling, 1973) often cause more perplexity than enlightenment although, it must be admitted, methodological scepticism can sometimes be taken too far (cf. Frauwallner in an essay published in 1957). The *Life of the Buddha* by the Kalupahanas[36] is one of the best examples of orthodox Buddhist scholarship of the kind we often also get from learned Bikkhus, and the authors acknowledge their indebtedness to Bikkhu Nanamoli's *The Life of the Buddha*, 1978. The authors resolutely eliminate from the Buddha story all mythological "accretions", and though they are aware of the difficulties besetting any critical historical exploitation of the Nikayas and Agamas, they appear to assume (unlike their colleagues from the New Testament department) that after demythologisation a sufficient core of historical fact remains accessible to, viz. reconstructable by the historian. In short, *The Way of Siddharta* belongs to the (modernist?) body of literature meant to give us an authentic biography of the real, historical Buddha, and an equally authentic account of the true and undefiled original teaching.

Lest the above sound too critical, let me add at once that not only Ceylonese or other Buddhist philosophers write biographies or (like Walpola Rahula) tell us "What the Buddha taught." Also western scholars are apt to do the same (e.g., Michael Pye, *The Buddha*, 1979). Michael Carrithers[37] tries to do as an anthropologist what normally only historians or Buddhist philosophers attempt to do. Clearly Carrithers too believes in the possibility of reconstructing the Buddha's original teaching, and as an anthropologist with a sense of history he tells his story against the background of the historical situation and spiritual ferment in Northern India at the Buddha's time (whatever the exact dates).

Somewhat different questions are addressed by Carrithers in another book.[38] Why do monks do what they do? What do they seek to achieve by opting for the more extreme ascetic life (solitary forest retreats instead of the more "coenobitic" style of urban or village temples)? How do they go about it? How do they cope with the (not infrequent) experience of failure? How do we account for differences between the different groups making up the famous "forest revival" of the last hundred years? The author deals with these questions in what is an exemplary study, embodying the results of three years of fieldwork conducted according to the biographical method (i.e., following the careers of monks that chose this particular path). Forest hermitages are one of the most ancient Buddhist

institutions. The amazing modern revival of this ideal most certainly merits at least as much attention from students of religion as is more frequently lavished on Buddhist modernism or the political role of the sangha. Carrithers shows that also anthropologists can deal professionally, competently and even movingly with the spiritual/ascetic life. The result, in simple and plain language, is a scholarly masterpiece of rare beauty. The many suggestive photographs, the literary quality of the writing, and the sophistication of the analysis make this study an interdisciplinary model for both anthropologists and historians of religion. Altogether Buddhist studies are extremely fortunate as they have reached the stage when it has become possible to synthesise the converging lines of philological, historical, philosophical and anthropological (e.g. M. Spiro, S. Tambiah, G. Obeyesekere, R. Gombrich, Mendelson and many others) research.

Mention should at least be made of the appearance of the first volume of a selection from the posthumous papers of the late Prof. Frauwallner (d. 1974).[39] This first volume contains essays and shorter notes which were in a practically ready-for-press condition but which, for all kinds of reasons, were never published. The main essay (which is also the opening essay) in this volume will undoubtedly also be of main interest to many readers: the historical value of the early Ceylonese chronicles. Most of the other items deal with technical points of Buddhist philosophy.

The market for books on religion seems to be insatiable. The puzzlement one experiences when looking at the English-reading market can also be extended to the German language world. Aren't there enough "introductions" to Buddhism? The answer will have to be given by the publishers who commission the books, by the booksellers who market them, and by the public that buys them. A small German paperback on Buddhism was reviewed in NUMEN XXXI (1984), pp. 143-4. Prof. Greschat of Marburg University has produced another, though far more reliable, small paperback[40] for the reasonably intelligent layman. The division of the small volume into three main sections and 50 chapters makes the text handy and useful for the seeker of information: The Community (pre-Buddhist Indian religions, the Founder, his disciples, the development of the doctrine and of the community—Asian Theravada, Asian Mahayana, and now also western Buddhism); the basic religious norms and their conceptual, philosophical, moral and religious evolution; Buddhism in the contemporary world (superstitions, politics, economics, marxism, secularisation). An unpretentious but in its way excellent introduction.

Among the most useful auxiliaries for the study of a subject are good dictionaries. In 1970 the late Prof. S. G. F. Brandon published a *Dictionary*

of Comparative Religion. The Theravada artt. in this dictionary were written by Prof. Trevor Ling, who later published them separately as a Dictionary of Indian and South-East Asian Buddhism.[41] Whilst the idea and its execution are good as far as they go, there is cause for regret that Prof. Ling did not use this golden opportunity for expanding the dictionary, enlarging on some articles and adding a few more entries as well as more cross-references and an enlarged bibliography, rather than simply lifting entries from an earlier Dictionary and printing them separately. A valuable addition could have been made by adding and cross-referencing terms current in several pronunciations. Many a visitor to Sri Lanka may have attended a *pirit* and would like to know more about it, but does not know that he has to look up under *paritta.*

An excellent short *Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms*[42] has been edited by Hisao Inagaki in collaboration with P. G. O'Neill. Sometimes too short and concise, it is nevertheless the ideal pocket dictionary, reliable, based on the standard works, and containing references to Japanese literature.

Another Dictionary[43] deserves mention, though it is clearly conceived along denominational lines and Lotus-centred. The useful appendices include lists of Hinayana schools, principal Chinese dynasties, Chinese proper names, key words and their Japanese equivalents, as well as almost 20 maps.

Publication Series and New Periodicals

NUMEN has already had occasion to report on the series of publications undertaken by the *Centre d'Histoire des Religions* of the University of Louvain-la-Neuve, under the direction of Prof. J. Ries.[44] Some of these volumes have already been briefly mentioned or reviewed at length (cf. NUMEN XXX, 1983, pp. 269 ff.). In fact, the *Centre* publishes several series (Collection *Homo Religiosus*, Collection Cerfaux-Lefort, Collection *Conférences et Travaux* and more). There are a few monographs among them, but the majority are collective volumes centering on a specific theme, or representing the Proceedings of colloquia and conferences. Some themes picked out at random: myth, symbolism, prayer, the expressions of the "Sacred."

An interesting, varied and at times extremely useful series, unfortunately little known outside Germany, is edited by the *Religionsgeschichtliche Seminar* of Bonn University.[45] The first 10 volumes of the series (vol. 1, 1976; vol. 10, 1983) cover such varied ground as the Dance of the Gods in India and Greece, Egyptian Symbolism of the Tree of Life, a terminological study of the use of "shamanism", a bibliography of

Yoga, and Manichaean iconography. Many of the fascicles would merit a detailed review e.g., Norbert Klatt's perhaps overambitious attempt (vol. 8, 1982) to develop a special literary-historical (as distinct from the traditional historico-critical) method to examine the "parallels" in Buddhist and Christian narratives. The question has been with us for a long time, but the author believes that his method more or less rules out the hypothesis of N.T. dependence on Indian and Buddhist influence with regard to some motifs (parthenogenesis, the aged Simeon, the temptation) but raises it almost to a certainty as regards the miracle of walking on the water. The last volume on the reviewer's desk (vol. 10) is an extremely useful compilation by K. H. Golzio giving chronological tables, charts and maps concerning *Rulers and Dynasties of East Asia: China - Japan - Korea*. The *Religionsgeschichtliche Seminar* of Bonn University and its director Prof. H-J. Klimkeit should be congratulated on their initiative. Equally useful is another volume edited by the same Institute, though not as part of the aforementioned series. This is a listing of all translated Mahayana texts.[46] In addition to be the bibiographical listings proper, there are useful, indeed indispensable, concordances (Taisho and Tohoku reference numbers) and indices (alternative Sanskrit, Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan titles). The over forty additional pages of the 2nd ed. bear out the words of Akira Yuyama: "a bibliography never ends, and is simply a beginning".

Juan Adolfo Vazquez, Professor Emeritus of Hispanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pittsburgh, has taken up the theme of the "Sacred". Branching out from his initial interest in South American pre-conquest religions (cf. also NUMEN XXV (1978) pp. 240 ff.) he founded a Bulletin called NAOS devoted to the linguistic study of the Sacred.[47] This is an ambitious project, dependent on the goodwill and the collaboration of experts and linguists all the world over: what terminology do the various societies and religious cultures use to refer to our "sacred" (or its equivalent), and can such a study bring us nearer to an understanding of the sacred? The Bulletin intends not only to carry articles, but also to process digests, reports and notes sent in by scholars.

One of the most "esoteric" and top notch Buddhological research institutes is *The International Institute for Buddhist Studies* (formerly The Reiyukai Library) in Tokyo. The word "esoteric" in the present context simply means that the Institute is not too widely known simply because it does not wish to be too widely known, the reason being that in view of shortage of space and manpower it does not want to be overrun by eager scholars wishing to use its resources and excellent library. Under the able directorship of Dr. Akira Yuyama, the Institute leaves the spreading of

the good news and Buddhist edification to others, and addresses itself
without compromise to expert scholars only, preferably those who
specialise, in addition to Far Eastern languages, in Sanskrit, Tibetan and
other relevant languages. Founded and sponsored by the Reiyu-kai (a
relatively recent Lotus-type denomination) and actively encouraged by
Reyukai President Kubo, the Institute is academic and non-sectarian,
though there is a possibly fortunate tendency to pay special attention to
the Saddharmapundarika (cf. e.g., the sumptuous re-editions of the fac-
similes of the Gilgit and Kashgar mss.). Lack of space precludes a detailed
listing of the Institute publications: editions of texts or text-fragments,
specialised philological studies, bibliographies (including *A Survey of Bud-
dhist Sogdian Studies*) etc. The Institute publications[48] can be subdivided
into

1. Studia Philologica Buddhica: Monograph Series
2. Studia Philologica Buddhica: Occasional Paper Series
3. Bibliographia Indica et Buddhica: Pamphlets
4. Bibliographia Philologica Buddhica: Series Maior (vol. I in this series
   is the revised and enlarged ed of E. Conze's *The Prajnaparamita
   Literature*; see NUMEN XXVII, 1980, p. 189)
5. Bibliographia Philologica Buddhica: Series Minor.

One very useful undertaking has been launched by the Reiyu-kai itself
(viz. its "Society for Studies of the Lotus Sutra") and not by the
aforementioned Institute. This is an index to the Lotus Sutra.[49] The first
fascicle (1985)—the whole index may run to 10 fascicles or more—takes
us from *amsa* to *artha*. The editors having invested many years, nay
decades, in the preparation of the index, there is reasonable hope that the
fascicles will appear in rapid succession.

Some publications of the "dictionary" or "lexicon" type (including en-
cyclopaedias) appearing in fascicles, seem to have been planned *sub specie
aeternitatis*. But who are we to complain, knowing only too well the difficul-
ty of finding the right specialist contributors and then getting them to
deliver their articles on schedule, not to speak of troubles with printers
and proofreading? Sometimes a delinquent contributor can hold up a
publication for months on end. One of these vast undertakings is the
Hobogirin Dictionary of Chinese Buddhism, initiated by the late Paul
Demiéville (see NUMEN XXVII, 1980, pp. 1-8) and continued by the learn-
ed and devoted *équipe* of his disciples and collaborators at the Hobogirin
Institute of the E.F.E.O. in Kyoto. The Hobogirin group may well (and
with some justification) consider itself the hub of the universe of Taoist,
Buddhist and other sinological scholars, who are blowing in and out of
their Institute whenever they visit Japan. But in terms of publications

their work is known and appreciated only by the small band of *electi* using
the highly specialised Hobogirin Dictionary. It was therefore a very happy
idea of the Institute to go a little more public and to increase its academic
visibility. The initiative became incarnate in a journal of rare excellence.[50]
Orders must be placed at different addresses, depending on whether made
in western countries or in East Asia. But all correspondence sent to the
editorial address will reach its destination. *Cahiers* no. 1 appeared in 1985.
Judging from the advance table of contents, *Cahiers* no. 2 (1986)—already
in press—promises to be even more exciting. To whet the appetite of pro-
spective readers let us mention only Rolf Stein's article on Kuan Yin: the
transformation of a god into a goddess. The journal is bilingual (French
and English) and contains, in addition to *articles de fond* also reviews. A
special boon to scholars not reading East Asian languages fluently, are the
surveys, research-reports and bibliographies of relevant Chinese and
Japanese publications.

Dialogues

   NUMEN does not, as a rule, review theological works although theology
is one of the most articulate expressions of religion and hence also among
the most important raw material for any "history of religions." Some
publications nevertheless merit mention because they attempt to provide
the basis for interreligious dialogue. Needless to say that "dialogue" too
is an essentially theological enterprise, but it is of paramount importance
to the historian of religion because the very fact that there is a sense of
the need for dialogue, a desire for it, and a readiness to engage in it, in-
dicates profound shifts and changes in the religions (and in the religious
consciousness) involved. But dialogue not only indicates shifts and
changes that have taken, or are taking, place; it also produces them.
Hence theologians often feel called upon to do preliminary spadework and
determine the parameters within which "their" religion can engage in the
enterprise. Thus it certainly is of significance to the student of Com-
parative Religion when a Zen (Rinzai monk) asserts: "Buddhism and
Christianity cannot be compared. But they can meet" (!). Prof.
Waldenfels[51] is such a theologian of dialogue, and the avowed purpose of
his *Fundamentaltheologie* is to describe the "context" of any such undertak-
ing. The context is our age. To do theology properly you have to read the
signs of the time, and these include changes that have led to a) a different
relationship between the various Christian Churches (areas of agreement
as well as of disagreement are very different today from what they were
in the past); b) the de-christianised character of modern western culture
(ranging from straightforward atheism to non-theistic humanism); c) the

challenge of hitherto ignored non-Christian religions. The detailed table
of contents (9 pp.), bibliography, index (28 pp.) and many cross-
references make Waldenfels's book not only a useful contribution to, but
also an instructive example of, a (Catholic) theological foundation of a
Christian dialogue with other religions.

Waldenfels practices what he preaches. He is actively engaged in inter-
religious dialogue and, as a good specialist, more particularly in one par-
ticular dialogue: with Buddhism. To be more exact: with the current
Japanese version of Zen Buddhism as interpreted by the so-called Kyoto-
school of philosophy. The fact that the Kyoto school is as unknown in
Japanese Zen monasteries as it is fashionable among European
theologians is neither here nor there. The dialogician is entitled to choose
and determine which philosophical expression of a particular religious
tradition he wants to take as his partner. By choosing Zen, Waldenfels
had to deal with questions such as adequate language (in order to make
dialogual communication meaningful), the concepts of "nothing" and of
"person" (the two main items on the Christian-Buddhist agenda), prayer
and silence, and the nature of tolerance (as distinct from indifference on
the one hand and relativism on the other). It comes as no surprise that
the notion of *kenosis* is mobilised to mediate between Christian theology
(especially Christology) and Buddhist non-theology. The title of
Waldenfels's serious and thought-provoking "Fascination of Bud-
dhism"[52] is not meant as a sarcasm but rather as an indication of the
book's high purpose: fascination in the sense of Rudolf Otto's *fascinans*.
The title is doubly meaningful if one realises the fascination which Chris-
tianity exerts on the Buddhist (both Zen and Amidist) philosophers of the
Kyoto-school.

Already in 1976 Waldenfels made considerable impact with his *Absolutes
Nichts*. The English version has appeared in paperback[53] and already
discusses in detail some of the questions taken up again in the later
publication. Also here the Buddhism discussed is that of the Kyoto-school,
the main question being the spiritual "emptiness" as conceived in Bud-
dhism and expounded by the Kyoto-school. Again the key for com-
munication with Christianity is provided by *kenosis*.

For the Basel theologian F. Buri the common denominator which also
serves him as a starting point is the notion of the "true self" and its
"Lord" (Christ for Christians, the Buddha or Buddha-nature for Bud-
dhists). Like the Catholic Waldenfels, the Protestant Buri is fascinated by
the Kyoto-school. His "Buddha-Christ as the Lord of the True Self"[54] is
aptly subtitled "The Philosophy of Religion of the Kyoto-school and
Christianity." The sequence of chapters follows as much as possible the

sequence of the Kyoto-school luminaries, but is much more than a mere history of the Kyoto-school since each chapter deals with substantive issues that were central to this or that particular thinker. Chapter 6 on Nishitani also contains a sharp and spirited polemics with Waldenfels's *Absolute Nothingness* since the latter too is based on Nishitani. Buri is well aware that his reflections will cause many Christian eyebrows to be raised. Can his view of symbolic expression and of the nature of the signified (or—in its emptiness—non-signified) beyond the signifiers still be called "Christian"? Buri is convinced that he writes not as a syncretist but as a Christian. Some Christian theologians will demur. It is not Prof. Buri's fault if the student of comparative religion (who anyway always has the wrong association of ideas) cannot help being reminded of the Central Asian medieval Manichee who spoke, admittedly as a representative of a gnostic tradition rather than of a mixture of German idealism, existentialism and Kyoto-school, not merely of "Mani the Buddha of Light" (*Mo-ni kuang-fo*)—a frequent Chinese designation—but even more ecumenically (or syncretistically) of the "Light Buddha-Christ" when referring to the saving principle.

For the Waldenfels type of dialogician Buri is no longer Christian enough and, in fact, commits the unforgivable sin of syncretism. For Buri the Waldenfels-type dialogue is still dogmatically fettered and, in spite of its alleged openness to the "challenge" of other religions, lacking that unreserved, radical openness which alone deserves to be called dialogue. Oddly enough none of the authors, no matter how fond they are of dialogues, has the courage to take the bull by the horns and ask the one relevant question: does a dialogue that does not (at least theoretically) end in the very real possibility of total conversion deserve that name? Instead most dialogicians very carefully build certain (allegedly "methodological") safety devices into their dialogical apparatus: only firm rootedness in, and commitment to, "your own" tradition qualifies you to engage in dialogue!

Prof. Shimizu's publication on the "self" in (Japanese) Mahayana Buddhism[55] (meaning, of course, the Kyoto-school and its claim to present "the" philosophical interpretation of Zen) could also have been discussed under the heading philosophy. Here it shall nevertheless be mentioned under the heading "dialogue" since this extremely interesting study is an indirect exercise in dialogue rather than in comparative philosophy, let alone comparative religion. The Buddhist self (viz. non-self), the Buddhist experience of self-realisation, the logic of *soku-hi* (as expounded by D. T. Suzuki and the Kyoto philosophers)—all these evidently have nothing to do with the original *anatta*-doctrine. They are rather extrapola-

tions from Chinese-Japanese Mahayana, peppered with lots of German-
derived philosophical jargon: identity through two-in-one, identity of
essence and existence, identity of A and non-A and so on and so forth.
At this point it may also be useful to emphasize that the Kyoto-school does
not refer itself exclusively to Zen. There is also a Pure Land branch. For
Shimizu as for other Kyoto philosophers the differences between Shinran
and the Zen masters are not always all that decisive: their common "Zen"
logic, especially when compared to western philosophy, makes them
related expressions of the same Mahayana presuppositions. The second
part of the book deals with "person" in Christianity. Since the fully
developed concept of "person" belongs to post-N.T. Christianity (early
Councils, later scholasticism) the sub-title of the book confirms the suspi-
cion that we are not dealing with the New Testament *sensu stricto* but with
the Kyoto-school's understanding of western philosophy's understanding
of Christian theology's understanding of the N.T. message concerning
Christ. Since the Kyoto-school, as already noted, is fascinated by Chris-
tianity, considering it the profoundest religious foundation of western phi-
losophy, even as Mahayana is the profoundest religious foundation for
Kyoto-school philosophy, there is a bright future ahead for dialogue.

The extent to which the Christian-Buddhist dialogue is a going con-
cern, or even a growing industry, appears not only from books (a sampl-
ing of which can be found in this survey) and colloquia (cf. NUMEN
XXXIII (1986), Chronicle section, p. 184), but also from ever so
many periodicals, the most recent addition to which should be men-
tioned here. As in many periodical publications of this type, the contents
of the annual *Buddhist-Christian Studies*[56] are very unequal. While many ar-
ticles (as well as books reviewed) can only be attributed to the authors'
bad karma, others are truly excellent and make the reading of this
publication a must for all interested in the ongoing Buddhist-Christian
dialogue.

The western fascination with Buddhism is a phenomenon that requires
sociological study. The claim that Confucianism too deserves the attention
of Christian dialogicians is hardly ever advanced. Julia Ching's is a lone
voice crying in the wilderness (see NUMEN XXVII, 1980, pp. 177-8), and
Taoism is practiced (by Taoists), studied (by sinologists), dialogued with
by philosophers impressed by the Taoist classics (Martin Buber and Karl
Jaspers did much in this respect) but does not figure, at least centrally,
on the Christian dialogue agenda. Although NUMEN does not, as a rule,
review or list books published in other than the main western academic
languages, an exception must be made, in this context, for the Pro-
ceedings of a Symposium held at the (Catholic) Nanzan University in

Nagoya in 1983. The volume "Shinto and Christianity"[57] is subtitled "The Universal and the Particular in Religion." The subtitle indicates the extra-ordinary interest of the publication: not an encounter between two universal(istic) religions but one which wants to be universal (is religious universalism a euphemism for spiritual imperialism?) and one that understands itself not merely as a native, national tradition but as the essence and soul of a natural community and its sacred ground of being. Perhaps Judaism would be the only parallel to Shinto, but Jewish-Christian dialogues are handicapped by a long and painful history, whereas the Shinto-Christian dialogue, so one assumes, can take place in a more relaxed atmosphere, precisely because of the utter strangeness of the parties to each other. The participants at the Nanzan symposium were two Shinto academics, two Shinto Shrine priests, two Catholic and two Protestant theologians as well as two historians of religion. In Prof. Kenji Ueda Shinto had one of its most articulate, forceful, impressive, openminded yet deeply rooted spokesmen. The volume should be translated—if only to show western scholars and dialogicians what a somewhat unusual dialogue can be like.

RJZW

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[12] Alain Boureau, *La légende dorée. Le systeme narratif de Jacques de Voraigne*. Préface de Jacques LeGoff (Ed. du Cerf, Paris), 1984, pp. 282, ISBN 2-204-02152-0.

[13] H. Bechert and R. Gombrich (edd.), *The World of Buddhism* (Thames & Hudson, London), 1984, pp. 308, £20.—, ISBN 0-500-25089-8.

[14] *Die Welt des Buddhismus* hrsg. von H. Bechert & R. Gombrich (Verlag C. H. Beck, München) 1984, pp. 309, ISBN 3-406-30115-0.

[15] *Butsuda-no-Sekai [The World of Buddha]*, Gakken Co., Tokyo, 1980, ¥32,000.

[16] A. K. Warder, *Introduction to Pali²* (The Pali Text Society, distributed by Routledge & Kegan Paul, London), 1984, pp. 464, ISBN 0-7102-0356-X.

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Obeyesekere's study of the Pattini cult in the Sri Lankan "low country" and Sabaragamuva is clearly an instant classic—an outstanding work of South Asian ethnography and anthropological-historical analysis, which almost overwhelms the reader with its *embarras de richesses*. This is an important and distinguished work by any standards—massive in scope, exhaustive in its presentation of the data, overflowing with insights, clearly and brilliantly argued. The guiding framework is an analysis of the major rituals devoted to the goddess Pattini, the *gammaḍuva*, "a cycle of rituals performed as an annual postharvest thanksgiving by a village or village cluster" (p. 3) and the "cathartic" *aṅkeḷiya* horn-game, with their associated texts; the corpus of texts is presented in translations and detailed summaries, always with the author's suggested exegesis, and the rituals are elaborately described in their social and cultural contexts. This minute documentation is itself a truly significant contribution to our knowledge. But the texts and rituals are themselves enveloped by the analytic concerns that Obeyesekere brings to bear, which simultaneously illuminate the Pattini materials and transcend them by suggesting theses of general import to a wide range of fields, e.g. Sri Lankan history, Buddhist studies, South Indian literary and mythological traditions, and, with particular emphasis, the anthropological application of psychoanalysis to the study of South Asian cultures and social structures. Few scholars of South Asia, of whatever specializations or persuasions, will fail to be drawn to the stimulating and insightful discussions offered here.

This is not to say that the book will generate consensus on all major issues. The very sweep of the argumentation virtually precludes this possibility, which is in any case hardly a desideratum. One of the great merits of the author's presentation is the forthright manner in which he argues his views; one result of this delightful clarity and openness should be a cross-fertilization of several disciplinary approaches current among South Asianists, especially history, anthropology, and psychoanalysis, all used here to good effect in the interpretation of a single cult. In certain respects, as we shall see, the author's combination of methods and approaches can have a revolutionary impact on our understanding of specific problems and themes.

The Pattini cult of Sri Lanka enacts a central myth incorporating a complex and richly encrusted story which has been best known until now from the Pallava-period Tamil classic, the *Cilappatikāram*, attributed to Ilaṅkovaṭikaḷ[1] (in passing, let me note my agreement with Obeyesekere's skepticism about this attribution, pp. 588-590; I believe that Ilaṅko functions in the text, and in the later traditions attached to it, as a legitimizing author-figure with certain specific semantic tasks). The story describes the marriage of the hero, Kovalaṉ (Pālaṅga in Sri Lanka) to the devoted Kaṇṇaki; his affair with the courtesan Mātavi, upon whom he squanders his wealth; his unjust death at the hands of the erring Pāṇṭiya king of Maturai, and Kaṇṇaki's rage, revenge, and subsequent apotheosis as the goddess Pattini, worshiped in Maturai, in the Cera (Kerala) capital of Vañci, and, eventually, in Sri Lanka. Most of this narrative skeleton survives in the Sinhalese Pattini texts, although much additional material is also present: in particular, the Sri Lanka rituals highlight the resurrection of the slain husband by the goddess Pattini, his wife. I believe it can be shown that the *Cilappatikāram* constitutes a literary reworking and crystallization (not, incidentally, as an epic, despite popular scholarly usage—both the *Cilappatikāram* and its companion-work, *Maṇimekalai*, are, as the Tamil tradition has always recognized, *kāppiyam*, i.e. *kāvya*, decidedly not epic) of a prevalent South Indian myth of the goddess, especially in her local embodiment in Maturai. The myth, no doubt an ancient one, still survives in many forms, including a variety of folk texts, both oral and written, such as the late-medieval *Kovalaṉ katai*. Most of these works still await serious study. The Pattini traditions cited by Obeyesekere reveal a great many striking continuities with this South Indian mythic material.[2] There is no doubt that the myth was imported into Sri Lanka from South India—very probably, as Obeyesekere argues, from Kerala, at a period prior to the specific development of the Pattini cult in Kerala in the direction of Bhagavatī-Kālī. Obeyesekere argues

forcefully that Pattini was essentially a Buddhist-Jaina deity worshipped in urban centers, largely by the mercantile communities who supported the heterodox Indian religions; that this cult was also influenced by, and perhaps even originated from, contact with West Asian goddess cults brought to Kerala by merchants from the Mediterranean area; and that Pattini was eventually transplanted to Sri Lanka by South Indian immigrants, perhaps Buddhist or even Jaina refugees, following the decline in the fortunes of these two communities in South India after the eighth century. I will return to certain parts of this complex thesis below.

Interwoven with the story of Pattini proper are several themes relating to competing visions of kingship. The introductory *patikam* to the *Cilappatikāram* (no doubt a later addition to the text) cites as the first of the book's three themes the notion that "*dharma* becomes death to kings who err" (the other two are the worship of Pattini by the noble, and the workings of *karma*). In the Sri Lanka material, the guilty Pāṇṭiya king has become the evil, three-eyed Pāṇḍi, who is contrasted with the good king of Soḷī (= Chola, i.e. Karikāla). The arrogant Pāṇḍi exhausts his people in corvée labor designed to produce a city equal to that of the gods; Karikāla, the king of Soḷī, raises the banks of the Kāverī River to safeguard his people against floods. In this contrast Obeyesekere sees the clash between a "divine" kingship, producing royal cities that model the cosmos, and the Aśokan ideal of Buddhist kingship, with its far more circumspect kingly role. The depiction of the evil Pāṇḍi would thus embody a strong note of popular protest against the pretensions and demands of the self-proclaimed divine king. This interpretation seems fairly convincing for the Sri Lanka Pattini texts quoted here, but it is considerably less compelling for the South Indian materials which, as Obeyesekere shows, contain clear parallels to this story. Karikāla figures in medieval Tamil genealogies as an ancient Chola king who erased the third eye of his enemy (sometimes called Mukari/Mukhari, or Trinetra Pallava) who failed to come to help raise the Kāverī's banks; in *Kaliṅkattupparaṇi* 197 Karikāla is said to have wiped out the third eye *in a picture*, an act of sympathetic magic that worked to perfect effect on the "real" Trinetra (Obeyesekere suggests that behind this description lies a context of ritual drama, as in the Sri Lanka Pattini cult). I agree fully with Obeyesekere's contention that this Karikāla is a creation of myth whose story can by no means be taken as simple historical truth, as the older school of South Indian historians have done. And the three-eyed opponent may, indeed, have divine connections of one kind or another—one thinks especially of Śiva. More to the point, perhaps, is Kṛṣṇa's three-eyed antagonist, Śisupāla, (MBh 2.33-42), who may have his own links with Śiva. But

what is the nature of the claim embodied in the evil king's third eye? Since I have set forth elsewhere, at some length, my own views on the question of divine kingship in the Hindu context, let me merely suggest here that the attack against Trinetra is a protest not against the entire cosmic model of kingship per se but rather at the *literalization* of divine attributes and metaphors by pretentious kings such as the mythic Vena. The *dharmic* Hindu king is only a partial manifestation of Viṣṇu (*viṣṇvaṃśa*); many cautionary tales warn against the attempt to realize his divinity literally. Only in Nāyak times in South India is there a true interpenetration of divine and human identities in the construction of a royal ideology (did this also affect the royal court at Kandy, with its imported Nāyak elite?). Hermann Kulke has also expressed skepticism about the conventional scholarly understanding of the god-king ideology in the Hinduized states of Southeast Asia. In short, the opposition apparent in the two royal images of the Pattini corpus seems to follow a specific (Buddhist) pattern in Sri Lanka.

To my mind, one of the most suggestive and important arguments presented in this book relates to the historians' use of mythic material. Karikāla, mentioned above, is not the only pseudo-historical figure to lose his historical credentials under Obeyesekere's treatment; Cĕṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, credited by the *Cilappatikāram* with establishing Pattini's worship in the Cera capital of Vañci, suffers a similar fate, and the famous Gajabāhu of Sinhalese legend becomes the hero of what Obeyesekere calls a "colonization myth." The approach to myth exemplified in this work has two conspicuous features: on the one hand, we are liberated from the patent absurdities and false historicism that result from the attempt to isolate the "reasonable" elements of a myth and to transform them into "facts" (i.e. Karikāla, whose name means "Black-Leg," was maimed by fire when he was a child; Aśoka may have had marital problems with his chief queen, Tiṣyarakṣitā; etc.)—generations of historians of India have favored this misguided method!—on the other hand, the myth, read in its cultural and historical context, does carry a message full of meaning for the historian who seeks to analyze change and cultural development. I can do no better than to quote Obeyesekere's bold *cri de cœur*, which, one hopes, will have some effect upon the future writing of South Asian history:

> A historiography that relies exclusively on well-documented and incontrovertible historical evidence, such as evidence from inscriptions, must surely be wrong, since it assumes that the *recorded* data must be the *significant* data shaping history and controlling the formation and transformation of the institutions of a people. A more imaginative *interpretation* using a broad variety of sources—from myth, ritual, and popular literature—would correct this narrow perspective. Such interpretations must combine anthropology and history rather than being satisfied with extrapolating history from mythic sources. (p. 605).

This is not, needless to say, an attempt to shake off critical analysis and evaluation of evidence—quite the contrary is true—but is rather an argument for enlarging the scope of historical study and for supplying the historian with new and more productive tools. I may add that in the particular case of Gajabāhu and his putative relationship with the Cera king Cĕṅkuttuvaṉ (the so-called "Gajabāhu synchronism," which has been called the "sheet-anchor" of South Indian history), Obeyesekere's conclusions are also borne out by traditional text-critical methods. As has been well-known for some time,[3] the Gajabāhu synchronism emerges only from the *Vañcikkāntam* of the *Cilappatikāram* and from the (later) colophons and *patikams* of the Caṅkam collection *Patiṟṟuppattu*, *not* from the decade-poems of the latter; since the relevant textual material is all thus centuries later than the supposed event, the proposed synchronism is, in fact, worthless.

Let me conclude with a few remarks on the main reconstruction of the Pattini cult's history that is presented here. Was Pattini in fact a Buddhist or Jain goddess? Although the *Cilappatikāram* does have a Jain coloring, one cannot but be struck by its persistent integrating drive—it seems to harmonize and enfold all the major categorical divisions of Pallava-period Tamil Nadu, geographically (the three ancient Tamil kingdoms, with their respective capitals), symbolically (the five *tiṇai*-landscapes, and the two classes of poetry, *akam* and *puram*), and in terms of the major deities (Murukaṉ, Māyoṉ, Kŏṟṟavai-Durgā) and religious communities (Hindu, Jain, Buddhist) as well. This *inclusive* tendency is somewhat surprising in a work which is socially linked to the "left-hand" communities (merchants, shepherds, Veṭṭuvar) rather than to the agricultural mainstream. Moreover, the underlying Pattini myth has close affinities with common patterns of the village mythology of the South, particularly the apotheosis of a woman who has been tragically wronged. From a purely South Indian perspective, one must also note the central focus on Maturai, the site of the culminating drama of the story, and Pattini's relations with the major goddess of Maturai, Mīnākṣī (this could, of course, reflect a later stage in the development of the myth, as in the case of Pattini's identification with Kālī in Kerala). Perhaps we should speak of a Buddhist or Jain Pattini as one major crystallization of the tradition, specifically developed in Kerala (with a merchant clientele) and transplanted from there to Sri Lanka after the eighth century. Can this Kerala Pattini be connected to the West Asian Mater Dolorosa and the cult of the dying and resurrected god, as Obeyesekere suggests? Given Kerala's extensive contacts with the Mediterranean world in the early centuries A.D.—the evidence is carefully marshalled here—the possibility certainly cannot be excluded. Still, the

ritual mourning for a slain deity who is subsequently revived is not, after all, as rare in South India as one might think; in fact, on the level of village religion, it may represent a surprisingly prevalent and culturally distinct type of *bhakti*, which I have elsewhere called "cathartic" (not in the sense Obeyesekere uses for the *aṅkeḷiya* rituals, but in an Aristotelean mode). Thus we have the folk genre of mourning songs, *ŏppāri*; Rati's lamentations over her husband, Kāma;[4] and folk-heroes such as the rather tragic Kāttavarāyaṉ, impaled on a stake, dramatically mourned, and then saved or revived.[5] South Indian folk-epics offer several more examples of the type. If this is the result of borrowing, it is a loan that has been remarkably well assimilated and diffused in village religion throughout the South; one could, I feel, argue equally plausibly that we have here an indigenous development, closely related to other elements of the religious universe of the South Indian village, that constitutes a fascinating parallel (also with contrasting features) to familiar West Asian myths.

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[1] Capably translated by V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *The Silappadikaram* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939); also A. Danielou, *Le roman de l'anneau* (Paris: Gallimard, 1961; English version, 1965). Russian and Czech translations also exist (by J. J. Glazov and K. Zvelebil, respectively).

[2] An important start in the direction of studying the various folk versions was made by Brenda E. F. Beck, "A Study of a Tamil Epic: Several Versions of *Silappadikāram* compared," *Journal of Tamil Studies* 1 (1972), pp. 23-38.

[3] See J. R. Marr, "The Lost Decades of *Patiṟṟuppattu*," *Proceedings of the International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies* 2 (1968), 1:19-24.

[4] *Iratitevi pulampal* of Citamparam Nārāyaṇa Piḷḷai (Madras, 1927). This particular *topos*, which has roots in village ritual, also has a classical extension in Canto IV of Kālidāsa's *Kumārasambhava*.

[5] See the folk-text, *Kāttavarāyacuvāmi katai*, studied in a forthcoming work by Eveline Macilamani-Meyer.

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